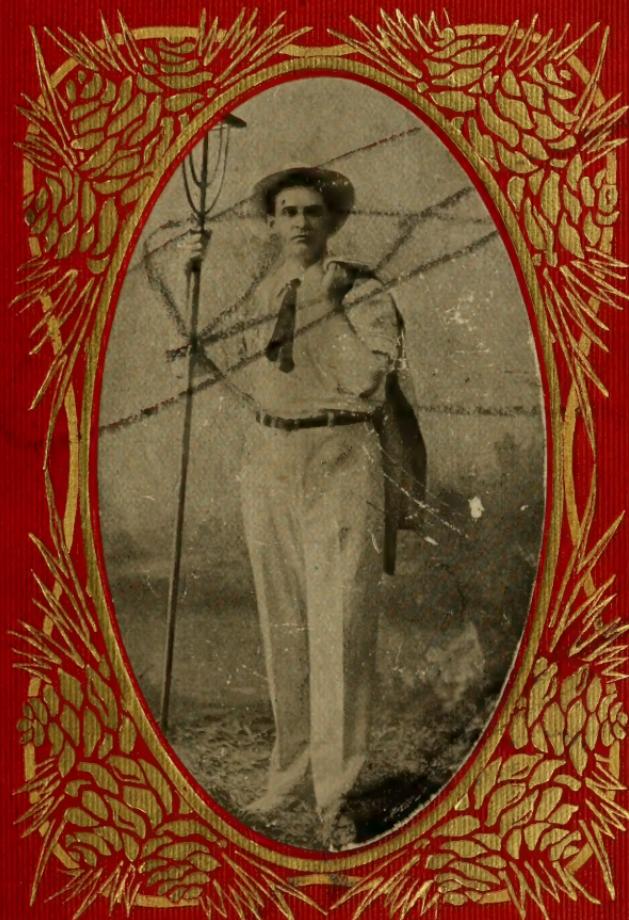


JAY GOULD HARMON

WITH
MAINE FOLKS



BY
GEORGE S. KIMBALL



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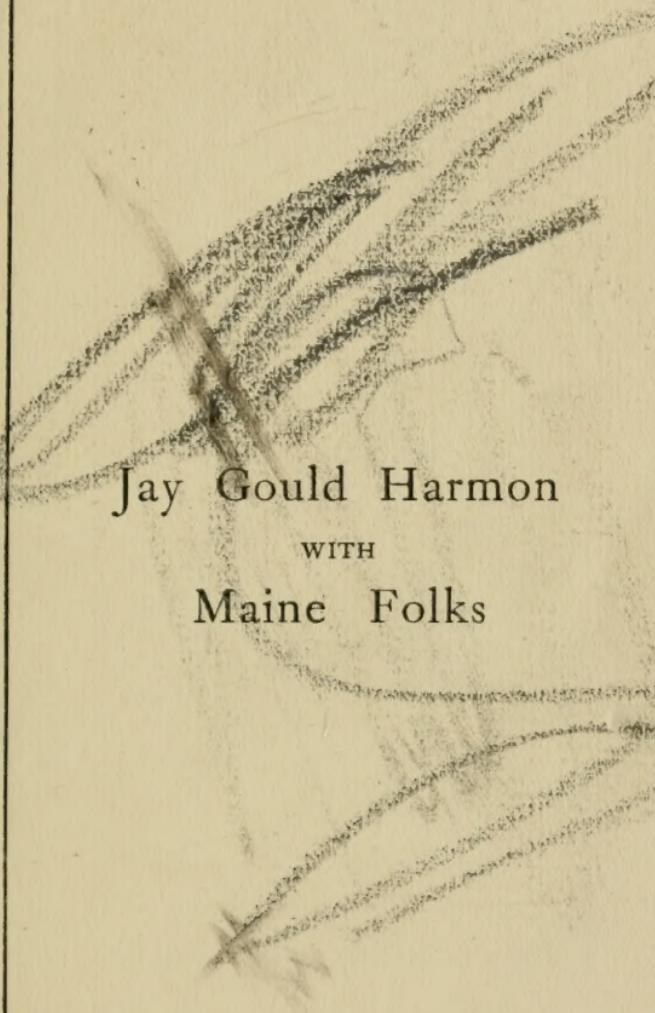


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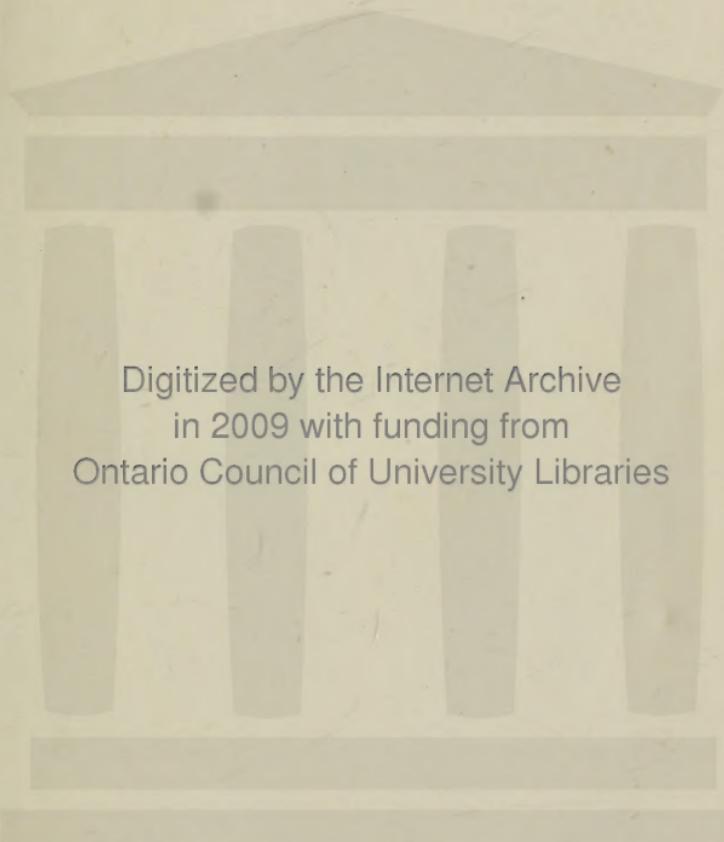
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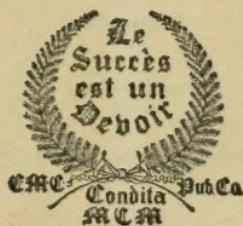
WITH

MAINE FOLKS

A Picture of Life in the Maine Woods

BY

GEORGE SELWYN KIMBALL
Author of "PINEY HOME"



BOSTON, U. S. A.
C. M. CLARK PUBLISHING CO., Inc.

1905

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*To
My Wife*

Illustrations

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Jay Gould Harmon

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JAY GOULD HARMON

CHAPTER I

WHY, Aunt Martha! What has happened? You look frightened, and seem all out of breath."

"Lois, I have had such a scare!" And Mrs. John Crosby sank into the great rocking-chair, in a state of utter collapse.

"What frightened you, Aunt?"

Mrs. Crosby was breathing heavily, but managed to gasp out, "There's a drunken tramp—lying side the road, near the brook—an'—and—I didn't see him till he spoke to me." And she closed her eyes as if shutting out a fearful sight.

After waiting for her aunt to recover a little, Lois asked:

"You said he spoke to you. What did he say?"

"That's what frightened me most. You see, he was so drunk that he couldn't get up,

and he had the audacity to ask me to get him a little water, and offered me a little cup. He looked dreadfully sick, and his voice sounded weak and thick."

"What did you do, Aunt?"

"Why, I just screamed, and ran as fast as ever I could."

The girl looked concerned as she said, "The man is probably sick, Aunt Martha, and not drunk. I will go out and see," and she moved towards the door.

"You'll do no such thing, Lois Crosby!" said her aunt querulously. "You are just like your father. He takes in all tramps and beggars, feeds and pities them, and so keeps himself poor. Come right back and lock the door and shut down the windows, and if he comes to the door we will pretend that there is no one here. I'll blow the horn three times, and the men folks will know there is something wrong at the house. Where is Joey?"

"He is asleep in your bedroom, Aunt. He is not feeling very well this morning, so I rocked him to sleep and laid him on the bed.

But, Aunt Martha, don't blow the horn until I go out and look up the road. He may not be a tramp, but some traveler who is tired and sick. It's a long way for the men to come for nothing."

"Lois Crosby, are you crazy? Have you forgotten the terrible time we had with the miserable tramp who forced himself into the kitchen and made us give him his breakfast, and took your uncle's coat and hat, and might have murdered us all if your uncle hadn't come along and kicked him out of the yard and set Lion on him. The dog would have killed him, most like, if Jim Gramme, your sweetheart, hadn't taken him off. As it was, he tore the man's clothes nearly off, and bit him so that the blood ran. Your uncle said then that we must never allow a tramp or beggar to come into the yard. 'If they insist, set Lion on them,' he said. I calculate that it was the same tramp who set the hay barn afire in the meadow the next night."

The girl had not heard what her aunt had said. She had sped across the dooryard to the

watering trough standing under one of the great elms near the road, and, raising one of her hands to shield her eyes from the glare of the sun, looked in the direction that her aunt had said she had seen the tramp.

How unconscious the girl was of her striking beauty! She was very tall and fair. In her face there was a look of composure. The eyes were deep brown, large and expressive. Her hair was neither gold nor light brown, but of that untellable shade which, catching the light of the sun, seems touched at times with golden fire. It rippled in waves from her low white brow. Her complexion was a healthful pale. The nose straight. The mouth had lines of tenderness and strength. The warm red lips were open just enough to show the perfect teeth. The form was superb, and there was a birthright grace and ease in every movement. From her distinguished grandfather she had inherited that *belle tournure* which is the peculiar gift of the higher castes of the Norman-French.

Near the brook was a man trying to rise.



“Are you sick, sir? Can I help you?”

He partly succeeded and then fell back. She saw him try to dip up some water with a cup. He failed to do so and sank back, his head resting upon his outstretched arm.

Without a moment's hesitation the pitying girl ran to the man's side, and said gently, "Are you sick, sir? Can I help you?"

The man tried to lift himself upon one arm, while with the other he held towards her a small drinking cup. In faint tones he said, "I think I have had a sunstroke. I am very dizzy, and cannot see. If you will kindly help me to a little water it may restore me." As he spoke the last words he sank back, and seemed to lose consciousness.

In a moment the girl had placed her strong arm under his head, and lifting it, held the cup to his lips. He opened his eyes and drank eagerly.

"Will you have more, sir?"

"Thank you, yes." And again she lifted his head, and he drank the full contents of the cup.

Lois Crosby had noted much, even in that

short time. The man was young, possibly twenty-eight, and though his clothes were dusty and soiled they were not ragged nor ill-fitting. Though the face was begrimed and pale, yet it was a face of marked character and refinement. The neatly trimmed black hair curled about his temples in sharp contrast to their marble whiteness. His face was guiltless of a beard. The eyes were dark, the lashes long and heavy. The voice was deep and sweet. Even as he lay there, so helpless, there was an indefinable something about the man which clearly proclaimed that he was far removed from the ranks of those miserable derelicts of humanity—tramps.

As these observations were passing through Lois's mind she was recalled by hearing the stranger say, "If you will help me to rise I think I can walk on. But this is very awkward. I am at a loss how to thank you."

For a reply she extended her hand and assisted him to his feet. He clung to her a moment, then walked along the edge of the brook a short distance and stepped over into

the road. They soon reached the lane leading into the farmyard, and Lois said, "There is a seat, sir, under the tree near the well. You had better sit down and rest while I run in and get you something to eat. May I ask where you are going?"

"To Falling Water, Miss. May I ask how far it is from here?"

"Only a mile and a half," she replied.

Suddenly he began to stagger, and it was only with considerable assistance on the part of Lois that he was enabled to reach the seat. He sank down, clasped the tree trunk for support, resting his head heavily on his extended arm.

"How dizzy I am," he said faintly. "If I open my eyes, the world reels. I have scarcely strength to thank you."

Lois noticed that he had a small pack, or knapsack, strapped to his back, made of water-proof cloth similar in color to his suit. She was about to suggest that he remove it when she saw her uncle coming swiftly into the yard, closely followed by his "farm hand," "big

Jim" Gramme. Her aunt at the same time came out of the kitchen door and ran to meet her husband. There was something ominous in the appearance of this huge, red-faced, perspiring old man, as he approached, shouting in a loud, coarse voice:

"What's the matter, Martha? What's happened?"

"John, there's another tramp here. He pretends to be sick, and Lois is giving him water and talking to him. I tried all I could to prevent her, but she would. Don't blame me, John. I couldn't help it. He's awfully drunk. I've been so frightened!"

Her husband did not seem to hear her, but rushing up to the stranger pushed his niece aside, and in threatening tones said:

"You get off my premises! Do you hear, get off! You can't fool me with your pretended sickness. I've seen too many of your kind. Start your boots, I say, or I will set the dog on you!"

The man raised his head, and in a faint voice answered, "I hear you, sir, and the moment I

am able to walk I will respect your wishes. But kindly allow me a moment to recover my strength."

"Uncle," said Lois, "don't you see he is not a tramp but a very sick man? We ought to take him into the house."

The old man turned and glared at his niece, and said, "You're a bigger fool than your father, Lois." And then turning to the stranger he continued:

"Are you going to get out of here, or shall I get the dog? He'll make you find your heels. I say, Lion, Lion!"

Mrs. Crosby had advanced to the side of her husband. She could see the pale face of the suffering man, she had caught the pitiful cadence of his uncommon voice, and her heart was touched.

"Oh, John," she cried, "don't set Lion on him. I begin to think with Lois that he is not a tramp, but a very sick man. Hadn't we better ask him to come into the house?"

Before she could say more her husband pushed her rudely aside, and advancing to Jim

Gramme ordered him to go and get Lion. "Hear him growl and bark. He knows there is a tramp here."

There was no doubt that the savage dog knew there was something going on in the door-yard, for from the time that John Crosby had first ordered the stranger away the dog had been growling. The rattle of his restraining chain as he tried to break loose could be plainly heard. The dog had been taught to hate tramps and beggars, and to allow none of their class to enter the yard. He had become so savage of late that it was not considered safe to leave him at liberty.

When Jim Gramme was ordered by John Crosby to loose the dog, he turned indignantly to his employer and said, "I would not set that dog on cattle, much less a sick man. He would kill him."

At this moment there was a scream from Mrs. Crosby and a cry, "Look out for Lion! He has broken loose!"

The dog, with eyes green with hate and mouth open, his cruel fangs gleaming, was

rushing across the yard toward the drooping figure on the seat.

Jim Gramme rushed forward to intercept the dog. Lois in an abandonment of fear moved quickly to the stranger's side and flung her arms over his shoulders as if to shield him from the enraged brute.

The dog with a growl sprang at the man just as Lois had flung herself protectingly over him. In his blind fury the dog sank his fangs in the forearm of the brave girl. There was a shriek of pain, one awful moment of terror, then the stranger was seen to seize the brute by his jaws and wrench them apart. The next moment Jim Gramme, with his powerful hands, grasped the dog by each jowl, swung him bodily above his head, and flung him with terrible force upon the stone wall. There was a sharp yelp, a convulsion, a slight quiver, and Lion was dead.

For a moment no one moved or spoke. Then Gramme turned to John Crosby and in a voice of suppressed anger and emotion said, "Mr. Crosby, I always knew that you was a hard

man, but I did not know before that you was a brute."

The old man stood immovable, with his face working, but he could not speak, so great was his agitation. The moment the dog had been torn away, the stranger had said, "Your arm, quick, Miss!" and seizing it, applied his lips to the wound, with the wise intention of drawing the poison of the dog's fangs.

"Lois! Lois! Are you hurt?" cried Gramme.

But before she could reply the stranger raised his head, and lifting the arm of Lois said, "I fear I am not strong enough—you do it. Work quickly—the one at the wrist I fear most. It is near an artery. Draw until the flesh is white."

Dropping upon his knees, Gramme placed the bleeding arm to his lips, in an effort to draw the poison from the wound, for he understood the peril arising from such blood-poisoning.

The stranger was attempting to rise. Before he could fairly gain his feet, John Crosby

rushed forward, seized him by the collar, dragged him along for some distance, and then hurled him forward toward the highway with all his strength, crying out, "You are the cause of all this trouble, you miserable good-for-nothing tramp; you deserve to be shot."

For a few steps the man kept his feet, then fell forward, striking his head against the sharp edge of the iron strap that bound the top of the watering trough. It was a horrible blow. With a groan he sank prostrate, the blood gushing from a great cut on his head. He seemed to be dead.

Lois and Gramme rushed to the stricken man, Lois crying out as she bent over the white face, "Oh, uncle, uncle! You've killed him! You've killed him!"

Just at this trying moment Major Daniel Crosby, Lois's father, and half-brother of John Crosby, drove up to the watering trough. He had been to Greensburg with his wife, who was teacher of French in the academy, and was returning to his home. He jumped from the buckboard, crying out, "What is it, Lois?

What is it, my child? Why, your arm is bleeding! My darling, what has happened? And who is this poor man?"

"Oh, father, father! Such a terrible thing has happened! Uncle John thought this man was a tramp—and—you see—you see how dreadfully it has ended."

John Crosby now came forward. "He brought it onto himself. He's got what he deserved, and you all know it. He's a dirty tramp."

Major Crosby, who had been bending over the unconscious man, arose, and with a face pale as death said sternly, "Brother John, may God have pity on you when you stand before His judgment seat and ask for mercy."

Then, turning to Gramme, he said, "Help me to put this poor fellow on the buckboard. His heart still beats and he is breathing. We will take him to our home. How young he is, and what a striking face!"

They laid him gently upon the floor of the springy buckboard, placing the Major's coat under his head. **Gramme threw** the soft

blanket over the stranger, who began to show some signs of recovering consciousness.

"Come with me, Lois," said her father. "You must have your wounds cauterized at once. Say good-by to your aunt. And are you coming, Gramme?"

"I am, Major Crosby. I am through with your brother."

They started with their suffering burden toward Falling Water, leaving the fiery old man standing in his dooryard, frowning and glaring at the departing buckboard. His young wife had sunk upon the floor of the porch in a faint. The terrible scene she had witnessed had overcome her.

Her little son Joey, fair in face but deformed in limb, had trundled out of the door of the house, and was asking in childish wonder, "Oh, mamma, mamma! What is the matter with Lion—he is so still?"

CHAPTER II

THREE is in the State of Maine a little village on the border of the woods called Falling Water, suggestively and beautifully situated at the confluence of two rivers; the lordly Penobscot rolling down from broad Chesumcook on the northwest, while on the southeast Baskehegan's flood pours out from a deep and mysterious wilderness. The great woods rise high and dark above the little plateau along the river's front on which the town is built, and roll away like

“A green surging blanket of woodland
Reaching far to Scotia's fair waters.”

What a wilderness is here! Twenty thousand square miles of interminable woods! Three times could the Black Forest of Germany be lost in this continent of trees. What a fund to draw on! What a playground for a

nation! What a reservoir of all that is precious and priceless to health, recreation, and life! What a mine of wealth! What a field for study and contemplation!

In history, song, and verse has "the pride of the Teuton" been celebrated for centuries, but no pen has yet been found to justly immortalize this mightier domain—this State of breathing woods.

A thousand lakes—those blue-eyed springs of life and beauty—send their pure waters through the arterial system of winding streams and shining rivers to bless the earth and all that live thereon. Here indeed is an Arcadia beyond the dreams of a poet.

For years this noble forest had suffered the assaults of avarice; for years its fallen children have floated down the aisles of water to satisfy the greed of man. But it is so vast that human selfishness, with all its power and "means to boot," has not been able to accomplish its destruction, nor dissipate this priceless heritage.

But have a care, O thoughtless men of

Maine, lest your children curse you for that stupid cupidity which leads you to destroy a living wealth that ages cannot restore.

At certain periods of the year Falling Water was a place of importance. In the fall all the supplies and all the men and horses necessary for the great lumbering operations were mobilized here, to be distributed among the great lumbering camps farther north. Again in the spring and early summer it was the scene of life and fiery action, when the great spring drives came out of the east and west branches of the Penobscot and the tributaries of the Mattawamkeag. Then it became the scene of action so romantic and so strenuous as to surpass in wild tumult and daring deed any scene of man's endeavor, save that of war. Night and day the camp fires blazed along the river front, and raucous voices of command could be heard as men of many bloods rushed to their work with a will and throbbing energy that must be seen to be appreciated or believed.

Falling Water was the natural home of the professional lumberman, river-driver, surveyor,

scaler, blacksmith, cook, and jam-buster, and all that class of semi-professional men employed in lumbering. The hunter who lived by the use of the rifle and trap could still be found there.

The "sports" of distant cities made this their port of entry into the woods. Here could be found the most reliable guides and all necessary supplies. The hunting and fishing season was to this little community the most joyous and profitable, for it brought not only money but bright and interesting people from the great outside world, which to many of these simple and honest folk was a world of surmises and dreams.

One of the most respected men in Falling Water was William Gray, usually called "Squire" Gray. He had formerly been a surveyor, but had retired from that strenuous work and "settled down." The Squire was a very useful man in the little community. He was postmaster, justice of the peace, first selectman, and chairman of the school committee. He wrote deeds and mortgages, and

was counseled with on many questions, legal and otherwise.

He was one of those rare old men whom we occasionally meet whose face is a "letter of credit," and whose quiet and dignified manners win the respect and confidence of all. There was something about him suggesting the gentleman of the old school. The white, clean-shaven face, the thin fine hair, once brown but now softly gray, the quiet hazel eyes, the firm and sensitive mouth, the strong nose, the calm demeanor and the kindly ways, betokened a character sound by nature and mellowed by years.

The Squire had bought the old hotel and had "fixed it up mighty spruce," as Lige Fessenden said, for his home. He used the long public room on the river side, with its two great fireplaces, as his place of business, one end containing the post office, while the rest was used as a store in which were kept for sale sportsmen's outfits of all kinds and a line of stationery, periodicals, and confections.

His family consisted of his widowed daugh-

ter, Mrs. Porter, and her daughter Helen, now eighteen.

Helen was the light and joy of her grandpa's life. When not at school she spent much of her time in the store and post office, and in his absence took charge of the business.

One of the great fireplaces was still kept in commission, and roared its warm welcome to the Squire's many friends, old and young.

During the long winter evenings every chair, box, and nail keg was sure to be occupied. Strangers often came to sit in that fire-lit circle, drawn by the gentle force of an unconscious hospitality, to listen to stories "of moving accident by flood and field," and the quaint sayings and strange conceits of hunters, trappers, guides, rivermen, peddlers, and the ubiquitous drummer.

The instinctive respect which men felt for the character of the Squire never admitted of vulgar or profane conversation. In fact, this "back-log circle" of the democracy of that northern border was not only the parliament of the town but its academy of entertainment, ful-

filled the functions of the theater, opera, and lecture-room.

On the morning that our story opens the Squire was regulating the chairs, boxes, and nail kegs that had been left the night before in their usual confusion, when he heard a heavy step on the porch, and turned to greet big Elijah Fessenden, the "reformed blacksmith," with his cheerful "Good-morning, Elijah!"

"Good-morning, Squire. I'm toler'ble, considering that I have to fight with Lige the First most of the time. But I think I am getting the better of him, Squire. I didn't allow him to swear once yesterday. He came purty nigh it when I burnt my finger on my hot iron, but Lige the Second just threatened to march Lige the First up Webb's hill if he broke out with any swear words. That sort of held him back. But he got away with one of Lige the Second's legs, and came durn nigh kicking poor Bige Crabtree out of the shop. I'm doin' my best, Squire, to live a decent life. I can't be a Christian all to onct. There's a good deal of me to reform. You know what Falstaff:

says: ‘Thou see’st I have more flesh than another man, and therefore more frailty.’ Well, that’s just the matter with me, Squire. There’s so much of me to be mean.”

“Don’t be too hard on yourself, Elijah,” said the Squire kindly. “We are all but ‘children of a larger growth.’ You have done well. No man has seen you drunk for more than a year, and you were always kind-hearted and honest by nature. We all think you’ve got Lige the First down, and will keep him there.”

“You’re right, Squire. I’ll keep him down, if I have to drown him to do it; but he has got so that when I threaten the trip up Webb’s hill, which is a mile long and durn near a mile high, he generally knuckles down. As Shakespeare says, he don’t like ‘eating the bitter bread of banishment,’ and I banish him to the top of the hill every time he breaks loose. But come here, Squire, quick. I’ll be dog-goned if I can make it out.”

“What is it, Elijah?” said the Squire, going to the door, where Lige stood looking towards the road.

“Look thar.”

The Squire’s eyes followed the direction of Lige’s pointing finger, and he saw Major Crosby’s buckboard moving slowly along with the Major and his daughter Lois on the seat, while on the springboard floor behind sat Jim Gramme holding the bandaged head of a prostrate man. They had turned from the main road and were moving through the pine grove that partly concealed the Major’s log house at Sunny Point, on the shores of the river.

“What do you calc’late this means? Did you see how pale the Major was?”

The Squire’s face wore a serious look. “You’d better go right down and see what the trouble is. I fear that Albert has been hurt on the drive, and that they are bringing him home. It would be a terrible blow to the Major if anything should happen to his son. Since he was obliged to resign his position as principal of the academy, owing to his old wound ‘breaking out’ again, he has built his hopes more and more on that boy. You had better take along the doctor. As soon as I

distribute the mail I'll come down and see what can be done."

The big-hearted blacksmith needed no urging, but was off at once, while the Squire entered the post office and proceeded to distribute the mail.

"Good-morning, Mr. Gray," said a thin, sharp voice at the little window of the post office.

"Good-morning, Miss Abby," replied the Squire pleasantly, without looking up from his work.

"How well you are looking this morning," said the insinuating voice, trying to modulate itself into sweetness. "Why, you are renewing your life like the beagle." This was followed by a gurgling "tee-hee, tee-hee."

There was no reply.

"Are there any letters for Sarah Whitcomb?"

"I think not."

"Any for Maria Cornish?"

"No."

"Just what I thought. Maria says she is

corresponding with a man down in Argyle and that they are going to be married by-and-by. Well, I don't believe it. I ain't seen her get any letters, and I've watched every mail that's come for a week.

"Have you heard the news, Squire?" she continued.

"What news?"

"Why, they do say that John Crosby is going to enclose on the message that he holds on Sunny Point, and turn the Major out. I'm sorry for the Major, but I'd like to see those two girls of his taken down. They say John Crosby was ashamed to turn his brother out himself, so he sold the message to John Sparks of Greensburg. You know Sparks has no mercy for anyone." Then crowding her head farther into the window, and trying to look gushingly sweet, she said confidentially, "Bige Crabtree is still making up to me, Squire, but there is only one I really care for."

"Look here," said an impatient voice behind her, "look here, my ancient Abby. If you can stop courtin' the Squire long enough for me to

do a little business with the U. S. Gov. I'll be much obleeged to ye."

She pulled her head out of the window and turned to see big Jake Cornish, the brother of Maria, looking down on her, half frowning, half smiling, as he took her place at the window.

There was a flash of anger in her small black eyes as she said, "Jake Cornish, you've got no more regard for the delicate feelings of a woman than a bear! There, now!"

But Jake, who was busy with the "U. S. Gov.," did not seem to hear her. At this moment Helen came tripping in, and, seeing Miss Abby Smart, remarked with a mischievous smile on her face:

"Miss Abby, there is a real nice little man waiting to see you on the porch."

"Dare say," said the relieved spinster. Turning to Cornish, who was looking over his mail, she said with an air of triumph, "Did you hear that, Jake Cornish?" Then rushing up to the window again, she said dulcetly, "Good-morning, Squire Gray."

"Good-morning, Miss Smart," said the Squire, with a noticeable touch of impatience in his voice.

"Oh, by the way, Squire, is there any letters for me?"

"Not this morning."

"There hasn't been for twenty years," growled Cornish, half audibly, and addressing her directly he said, "What are you going to give my sister Maria for her wedding present? She is going to be married next month."

Miss Abby looked at him in astonishment, then flounced out, saying, "Well, I'll just wait until I hear the wedding bells ring and see the orange blossoms."

"Both ordered, Abby," said the imperturbable Jake.

"You're a little hard on Miss Smart, aren't you, Jacob? Don't forget she's a woman," said the Squire, standing at the open door of the post office.

"That's just what I don't forget. She's been a woman long enough to know something. What right has she to come here and plug up

that post office like a cork in a bottle while there is a dozen of us around here waiting for our mail? Did you hear her fling out about my sister, Squire? That sort of riled me. She's constituted herself a telephone system of misinformation for the whole town. She's a sort of hear-it-all, know-it-all, tell-it-all. Such women make lots of trouble in a neighborhood. One such in a State might do, but one in a town is too many."

Just at this juncture Jim Gramme came in, and going directly to Mr. Gray said in an excited whisper, "Mr. Gray, Dr. Finnegan says you must come right down to the Major's. There's like to be bloodshed. You're the only man, he says, who can prevent it. You mustn't let anyone know it, for they'd all come running down to see the fight."

"The fight, James! Why, what has happened?"

"Do come, Mr. Gray, before anyone hears of it, and I'll tell you all about it as we go along."

The Squire turned to Helen, saying, "Don't

tell anyone where I've gone. Just say I'm out."

As they moved towards the Major's, Gramme recounted what the reader has already learned up to the time of their arrival at Major Dan's house. Gramme, continuing, said they put the fellow in Albert's room at the wing of the house. The doctor had just got there, and was dressing the wound, when Constable Jones with his man drove up with John Crosby and a black-looking fellow called Sapient, and said they had come to arrest the man the Major had taken pity on, for attempting to kill the watchman and for robbing the bank at Greensburg. The Major met this constable at the door and asked him if he had a warrant for the man's arrest, and the constable said no, but they had a witness with them who had testified that he saw this man and another drive hurriedly out of Greensburg towards South Greensburg about the time the bank was robbed. He knew it was the same man, on account of the strange helmet hat he wore, made of straw. "There is the hat now," said the constable, "right there

on the fire frame." He was the man, no doubt, and he was going to take him.

The Major stepped back and got Albert's Winchester, and standing in the doorway said to the constable, "This man is my guest, Mr. Jones, and he is terribly hurt, and until you bring a warrant for his arrest you can't enter this house nor arrest this man."

There was a look on the Major's face that the doctor said meant business. Lige had the big fire poker and ranged himself alongside of the Major, and instead of swearing at the crowd outside was quoting Shakespeare at them by the yard.

"They are at it yet. Do you hear 'em?" said Jim.

The Squire made no reply, but entered the front door and crossed the living room into the wing bedroom, at the back of the house.

The Major still stood in the door with the Winchester. Lige was saying, "You hold the right, Major, and I'll take care of the center and see that no one flanks us. I ain't had so much fun since Antietam." Addressing John

Crosby he continued, “Come on, you ‘fat and greasy citizen,’ and you too (addressing Crosby’s witness), you ‘hatchet faced Spaniard, with forehead villainously low!’ Come on, and die on a fire hook!”

“Don’t take any notice of that interfering fool of a blacksmith, constable, but do your duty,” said John Crosby, his face purple with rage.

“I’d rather have a fool to make me merry, John, than experience to make me sad,” replied Lige.

The constable advanced as if to enter, Lige raised the iron poker, the Major, white to the lips, said, “At your peril, Constable Jones!”

This was the situation when the Squire appeared at the door just back of the two determined men. He made a signal for attention, which was respected. The constable stepped back from the door, and said, “Squire Gray, who is right in this matter? I leave it with you.”

“Constable Jones,” said the Squire, “you should know enough of law to understand that

you are proceeding illegally. It appears that on mere suspicion, and the hearsay of this man," pointing to Sapient, "who is as much a stranger to us as the injured man in this bed, you have come here without a warrant, to deprive an American citizen of his liberty. Is there anyone here who knows this witness?"

"I know him," growled John Crosby, "and can vouch for him."

"How long have you known him?" inquired the Squire pointedly.

"Well, I've known him nearly two weeks, and I bought bonds and stocks of him."

"Well, that will not affect the fact that you are proceeding illegally, and that you cannot take the body of this man from this or any other house without a warrant, unless someone can swear they saw him in the act of assaulting the watchman and robbing the bank."

"I guess you're right, Squire," said the constable, rather crestfallen, "though I'm pretty sure he's the man we want."

"'A Daniel come to judgment, yea, a Daniel,'" cried the delighted blacksmith.

"Squire Gray," said the constable, "if you will give me your word that this man shall not escape while I take the time to go and secure a warrant, I will drop the matter for the present and proceed as you say."

"This is scarcely necessary, Mr. Jones. I have been talking with the injured man, and while he is too ill even to rise in the bed, he is yet strong enough to testify in his own behalf. He has asked me to say to you that if you will come to the bedside, after sending away the men outside, he will satisfy you that he cannot possibly be the man who robbed the bank at Greensburg last night. He has overheard the conversation and understands the charges made against him. If he cannot satisfy all of us of his innocence, as justice of the peace I will guarantee that he shall not escape from the hands of the law, but shall be detained here until you have time to secure your warrant and arrest him legally. Are you satisfied to do this?"

"Perfectly, Squire Gray."

"Then come in."

When the constable had entered Lige shut the door almost in the face of John Crosby and his witness. In a few minutes they drove off, leaving Major Crosby, the constable, Lige Fes-senden and the Squire around the bed of the suspected man.

The injured man had been pillow'd up in bed. As he glanced at the four inquiring faces about him, not one seemed unfriendly, but all bore varying expressions of interest.

"Now tell your story," said the Squire.

"I think," said the man, "that it would be a wiser proceeding if you or the constable would question me."

"Quite right," said the Squire. "Mr. Jones, as you are the one most interested, you do the questioning."

Constable Jones had heard nothing. His eyes had been fixed upon the splendid figure before him. The broad shoulders, the deep chest, the strong columnar neck, the dark, expressive eyes, the black hair that curled around the faultless Grecian head, the rich tones of the voice, the shapely hands; everything about

the man was startlingly unexpected to this rough but honest constable, who had come, as he thought, to arrest a wretched and repulsive criminal.

"Why don't you begin, Mr. Jones?" said Major Crosby, whose faith in his strange guest had not faltered one moment.

"Oh, yes!—Oh, yes!—let me see—ah—ah—why Squire, you ask him; you know how better."

"Very well, Mr. Jones."

A look of relief came over the faces of Major Crosby and Lige Fessenden, and the eyes of the stranger turned towards the Squire.

"May we ask your name?" asked the Squire.

"Gould—Jay Gould—of New York."

The Squire looked keenly at the sick man as he gave his name as Jay Gould, evidently questioning his sincerity or his frankness. The look was quickly observed, and as quickly interpreted by the pseudo-tramp, who at once explained:

"You wonder at my name. It is not all of

it. For good reasons I prefer to be known by only a portion of my name. That which I have given you is mine. My mother's name was Gould, but she did not belong to the great financier's family. My father so admired the famous Jay Gould that he insisted upon naming me for him. At present I do not choose to be known by my father's name. I do not wish to assume a name I have no claim upon, so I compromise with my conflicting sentiments and call myself by my given and middle names."

"I have no right to question either your name, or your motive for using less than all of it," said the Squire. "Where did you stop last night, Mr. Gould?"

"At South Greensburg, at the house of Mr. Alexander."

The answer was so simple and direct that the eyes of the listeners searched each other with knowing expressions.

"Were you in Greensburg last night? You heard the witness say that he saw you with another man driving swiftly out of town."

"Yes, sir. I was in Greensburg last night, and there was another man with me. I did drive swiftly in and swiftly out of the town."

The Major looked troubled, and so did the Squire. Lige shook his head dubiously, while the constable looked about with a puzzled expression.

Then Gould continued, while his auditors listened with close attention: "Mr. Alexander, as you probably know, is manager of the Spool Works at South Greensburg. He was very kind to me, and we had a long friendly talk before I retired. In the night Mrs. Alexander was taken suddenly ill. Her husband came to my room and asked me if I would do him the favor of going for the doctor at Greensburg. I arose hastily and dressed. Mr. Alexander's carriage was waiting at the door, and I drove as fast as possible, both ways, and in one hour the doctor was at the bedside of the sick woman. If I have told the truth, gentlemen, this will account for my being in Greensburg last night. You can easily verify this by telephone or telegraph to Mr. Alexander."

Closing his eyes wearily the man ceased speaking.

Major Crosby was still standing at the foot of the bed, with a look of inexpressible relief upon his face. The constable from his chair at the side of the bed still gazed at Gould as if fascinated and hypnotized into inaction of both mind and body. Lige got up, and with a long grunt of satisfaction walked towards the fireplace saying, "Thar's a man 'more sinned against than sinning.'"

The good Squire placed his hand gently upon the brow of the exhausted man. He said in sympathetic tones, "Don't try, Mr. Gould, to say any more. I believe every word you have spoken." And he turned interrogatively toward Constable Jones.

"And so do I," said that worthy officer.

"Amen!" chanted Lige. He continued, "'A hit, a very palpable hit.'"

"Constable Jones," said the Major almost sternly, "your course is plain. Go to Greensburg at once. While we all believe what this man has said, it is due to him as well as the

people at Greensburg to verify it. Having done this, let every man in Greensburg know that they have been on the wrong trail and have persecuted an innocent man."

"I'll do it," said the constable with an unction that left no doubt in the minds of his hearers of the sincerity of his purpose. As he passed out, Lige asked this question:

"I say, Jones, who is that lank, hatchet-faced, ferret-eyed, lantern-jawed witness of John Crosby's that was so mighty ready to give his testimony? How did it happen that he was hanging around Greensburg at one or two o'clock in the morning, and saw so durn much? Chew upon that view of the case, Constable Jones."

Jones stopped and looked thoughtful for a moment, then said, "I don't exactly know. He's been around the hotel some two or three weeks. I've seen him driving with John Crosby several times, and he says he is an agent for a syndicate house in Chicago. You heard Crosby say he had bought bonds of him. But I must go."

"Well," said Lige, muttering to himself, "I'll bet a cock partridge that he's an agent for the de—de—de— Hold on there, Lige First. Keep down. There's no opening here for you."

Lige entered the long bedroom and was pleased to see that Doctor Finnegan had come in, and was giving orders for the stranger's comfort.

"What have you in your grip, my good man?"

Gould looked up and said, "There is a change of underwear, two night-dresses and other necessary articles, and a little money."

"Money is it," said the astonished Irish doctor. "Well, faith, you're no tramp if you have got money, I'll gamble on that. Did you hear that, Major? He has money! I'll do my best for him."

"Anyone would think to hear you talk, Dr. Finnegan, that it was the money and not the man that you was thinking of."

"Devil a bit, Major. I was only surprised at his confession. You see, if he had robbed

that bank he never would admit that he had money. See, Major? See?"

"That's a good point, doctor; but what shall we do?"

"Whist now to what I am telling. His head is all right. Have that foine girl of yours make some hot bafe soup. And, Major, you and I will give him a nice warm bath, and put that shroud of his on, and we'll go away, every one of us, and let him sleep. But he's a wonder, Major. Did you notice his muscle? An arm like a Sullivan."

After he had been bathed, and a change of clothing had been effected, they told him to try and sleep. Darkening the room, they quietly went out, closed the door, and Jay Gould slept.

CHAPTER III

WHEN Gould awoke it was morning. He had slept nearly eighteen hours. At first he could not recall where he was. Had he been dreaming? He still saw in his mind's eye the face of the pitying girl bending above him in gentle benignity. Nothing more holy, more pure, had he ever seen, unless it was the remembrance of his mother, who when he was a child would gaze at him with love and wonder, which he now recalled only to give him pain, for she had left him when he was yet a tender child, and only the memory of the love that had been his remained. But he had seen in the face of this girl something which redeemed the woman of his world, false, vain, and heartless as he had found her. This was what the voice of his inner consciousness was saying, but another voice sternly admonished him to

"trust not, relent not," for had he not been betrayed, deceived, and cast aside, his hopes crushed, his love spurned—and by a woman? Had he not found man more helpful, more tender and trusting, even while circumstances were against him? Yet there would come to his memory that cry of pity that he had but faintly heard: "Uncle, uncle! You've killed him! You've killed him!" He could still feel the touch of the protecting arms, see in her pure eyes a soul abandoned to pity, that look of sympathy that can shine in utter prodigality only from a woman's soul.

His strange illness had dulled his senses. His feeling of utter friendlessness had made him wretched beyond degree. Young as he was, he had lived long but not well. He had tasted of nearly every pleasure, and found much of the fruit bitter. All the world had served him; he had served no one. By nature he was noble, but in the vain, pretentious, and hollow society in which he had moved he had learned to hate the world, to mistrust the sincerity of nearly all men, and all women. The

worthlessness of his life he had come to realize. The world of pomp and circumstance, of heartlessness and deceit, had no longer a place for him. His instinct told him that in work was his salvation. The world's workers commanded of him a growing respect. He saw in them the dynamic force that was moving the world, self-generating, and conducting its energy along the live wires of human endeavors to the ends of the earth. He felt that he was insulated, detached from the circuit of energy, unproductive, worthless—a dead wire.

Disgusted with society and with himself, he had bent his steps, with the instinct of primal man, to the land of forest and streams, for which somehow his heart yearned, for to him it seemed that "Beside the still waters, and in green pastures" he might find that strength, that healing, that "balm of Gilead," that his soul craved.

Our hero, as we may now call him, drew himself up and looked around. Yes, he remembered somewhat dimly where he was. Although the log room was unfamiliar, he

gradually recollected his experience of the day before. The strange little doctor with his red hair and his fat and jolly face; the attempted arrest; the unaccountable interest and tender care of his host—a care, a friendliness so manifest that it came to him as a new and startling revelation, for it was a manifestation of unselfishness never experienced by him before.

He could hear footsteps moving about in the adjoining room, and short snatches of song from lips which he knew were red with youth. The silent logs of the wall hemmed him in with their protective massiveness. The rude stone fireplace in which a great log slowly burned for ventilation lent a cheer to the room. Over the rough mantle hung a Winchester rifle, and near it the equipments of the guide and hunter. There were books lying on a table near the window; a large home-made settle stood near the fireplace, and two or three rocking chairs fashioned out of native trees were scattered about the room. On the floor were several rugs of deer, bear, and wolf hides. There was an air of comfort and restfulness all about

him that was unknown in his former luxurious home.

He could hear the low music of the moving waters, and through the partly opened window could see the rugged side of the mountain, and the dipping field beneath it. He was close to nature. He felt a thrill of tenderness and love for her that he had never known before. He thought he heard steps just outside the window. He knew they were not the steps of man or woman. They were too irregular and hesitating. He raised his head, and saw to his amazement a fawn, with eyes lustrous with gentle life, looking into the room, and a little beyond was the partly disclosed form of the mother doe, the fairest epics of the woods. Could he believe his eyes? Had the love and kindness that had so unexpectedly been his also been extended so that it covered the beasts of the field and the birds of the air? The first sight of the doe had caused him to glance at the rifle, that he might slay; but the fearlessness of these gentle beasts drove such thoughts from his mind.

The door near his bed was quietly opened, and a voice said, "Are you awake, Mr. Gould?"

"Yes, sir. How long have I been sleeping?"

"Nearly eighteen hours. Are you feeling better?"

"Much better, sir. How can I thank you?"

"By getting better as fast as possible. Are you strong enough to dress and have some breakfast?"

"I think so, sir. My head feels a little dizzy yet, but otherwise I am quite strong. I beg your pardon, sir, but I am interested to know how it happens that deer are so social here. Two have been near the window this morning, and the little one looked in. I thought deer very wild. Are they tame deer?"

"Everything is tame where my boy and girls are. We never shoot deer on our premises. We have three hundred acres, mostly woodland. The deer seem to understand that they are safe if near the house. In the winter Albert feeds them hay, and my two daughters

scatter on the snow everything that the kitchen affords. Sometimes I fear that our dog Trieve doesn't get his share. I've caught a couple of trout for your breakfast, and my daughter Madeline is preparing them for you."

He started to go out, but returned, saying, "You will find water, towels, and soap on a bench under the two pipes just back of the house. By the time you are ready your breakfast will be served."

Gould arose and proceeded to dress. In doing so he discovered that his clothes had been thoroughly brushed and laid out, his shoes cleaned, and his pack laid within easy reach. As he stood under the two great pines in the morning light, he felt rolling down upon him the fresh air of the forest. It seemed charged with life and hope. How sweet and invigorating it was! He felt a new strength. This was what he had pined for—the native, the primeval. Had the morning come, and the dark chapter closed? Should he yet be happy? Could he forget the fruitless past? Then came a voice:

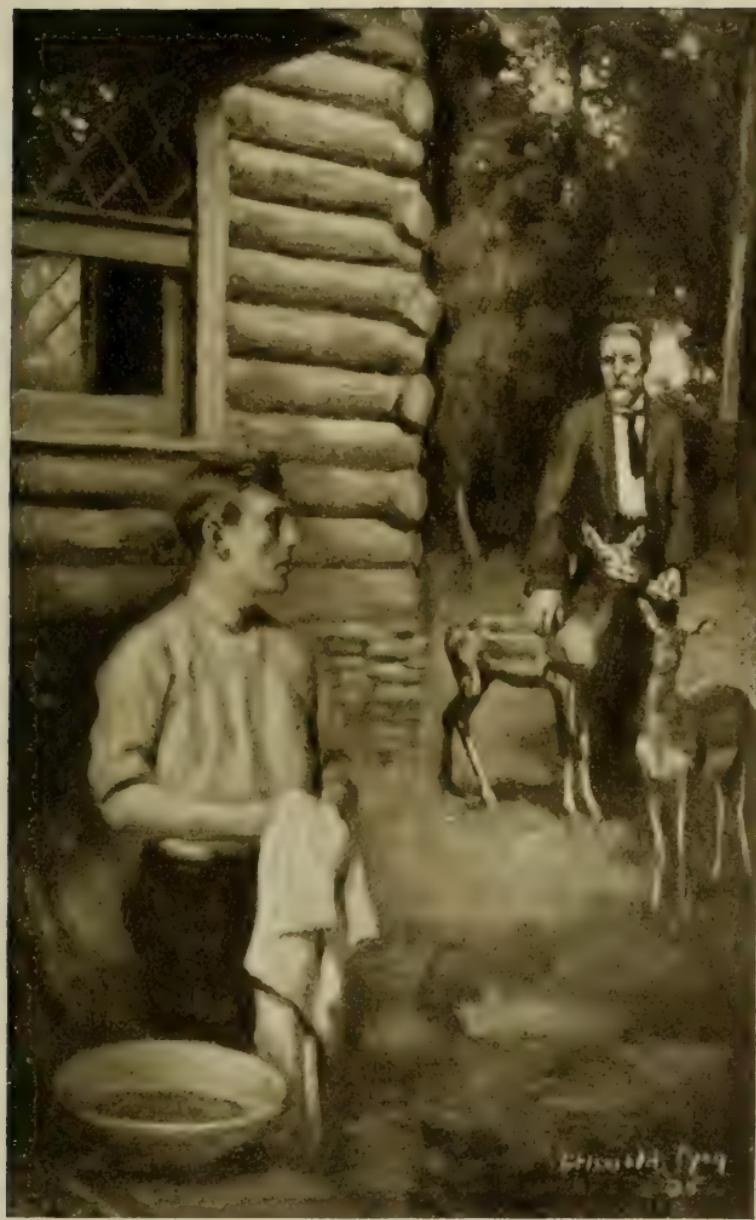
"Are you nearly ready, Mr. Gould?" and he turned to see the tall form of his host waiting near the corner of his bedroom, with one arm laid caressingly over the shoulders of the fearless doe, while the dappled fawn was eating from his hand.

They went in and sat down to the breakfast table, the Major serving. Someone entered.

"This is my daughter Madeline, Mr. Gould." He looked up to encounter the gaze of a remarkably attractive girl of about fifteen summers. She held in one hand a coffee pot, in the other a plate of freshly cooked trout. Somehow, embarrassed as she was by these burdens, the man of society took note that she bowed and courtesied with surprising grace and ease, saying:

"We are glad that you are able to breakfast with us this morning. Will you excuse my running in and out, Mr. Gould?"

"My little girl," said the Major, "is very busy these days. She is our housekeeper, for my wife," he said slowly, and in an embarrassed manner, "is teaching French in the academy.



“ He turned to see the tall form of his host ”

My daughter Lois, whom you met yesterday, is with her uncle. Her cousin, little Joey, cannot go to school, and Lois instructs him and helps her aunt. My son Albert is on the drive. In fact, all my family work hard but me; I can do but little."

There was a tone of sadness in the Major's voice as he concluded.

"What is your trouble, Mr. Crosby?"

"I was wounded in the lung while in the army. I was formerly principal of the academy here, but had to resign on account of a tendency to hemorrhage. The doctor said I must have outdoor life or I would not live. I have much to live for and am trying to get back my health that I may enjoy my family. But we will not talk about that. Eat a good breakfast, and then go into Albert's room and lie down again and keep quiet until you are perfectly strong. I shall go into the back meadow and try and make a little hay. I will be back at noon, and will look after you again. The doctor will probably come to see you this morning and dress your wound. Make your-

self perfectly at home. You are welcome to my house."

The voice of Daniel Crosby was touchingly low and gentle. There were deep lines of care in his long face, and when he spoke of his family his eyes seemed holding back tears.

Gould was thinking fast. He saw everything, felt everything. His soul had grown receptive. He felt the tender pathos of his host's kindly spirit. He talked but little, but as he arose from the table said, "I have enjoyed my breakfast very much. After the visit of the doctor I think I will take a walk. I have a check for some baggage which was shipped to this town which I will get."

Here the Major interrupted him. "Mr. Gould, I beg your pardon, but please remember that I feel myself responsible to the constable for you."

Gould blushed to the roots of his hair as he said, "I forgot, Major Crosby, I forgot."

They moved out of the door to the porch, and the Major continued: "Don't misunderstand me, Mr. Gould. I have the utmost

confidence in your just intentions, but the town is much excited over what occurred yesterday, and should you go to the depot I fear that you would be embarrassed by my curious neighbors who would gather about you. And they probably know all about the conditions under which Constable Jones desisted from making the arrest. Remain about here, and when I return at noon I will go after your baggage. Feel perfectly at liberty to walk about the woods at the back of the house, in fact anywhere but up town. Here comes the doctor. I must get to work."

"One moment, Major Crosby, before you leave. There is something due you from me. I am a stranger to you. It may be all that your brother John Crosby charges me with is true. I don't know that I've really denied it, and you have not asked. Let me say, my new friend," and there was a deep pathos in his voice, "in my own defense, that you are not harboring a criminal nor a tramp. While I am most unfortunate, in trouble, and friendless, I have done nothing in violation of any

law of man. I think I can say that the world would call me respectable. Furthermore, while I count myself a poor man, yet I am removed from want and the need of charity, except such charity as you have extended to me within your home—a charity I did not think obtained among men. This is all, Major Crosby, for the present."

"And how do I find you, sorr, this morning?" was the salutation of the doctor as he shook hands with the patient.

"Quite well, I thank you. I slept and ate well."

"And how is the head?" said the doctor, as he began to undo the bandages. "I think, sir," he continued, "that you had better step into Albert's room while I dress the wound."

Without a word Gould entered the room and said, "Where will you have me, doctor?"

"Right on the stool there, so I can get round you."

There was something about the little man that greatly amused Gould. The doctor was very short and rotund. He did not seem

to have any neck, his head resting apparently on his shoulders; the hair was fiery red, the eyes blue and bold, the complexion ruddy and fair, save for the great freckles like brown islands scattered over his face. He had a true Irish nose, which gave him a mildly bulldoggish expression. There was something about him that was pleasing; the roguish twinkle of his eye, the harmless and amusing assertiveness, his evident pride in his profession, his strutting little walk, the short bandy legs—the whole appearance suggesting a glowing globe of flesh running around on little legs directed by a superimposed smaller globe above. But as soon as this curious-looking man began to dress the wound, Gould knew that he was in the hands of a skilled surgeon, for there was the firm and delicate touch, the sure and swift movements, of which only a trained hand is capable.

“Do I hurt you?”

“A little.”

“You are no liar. There, now, I think that will do for to-day. The cut is healing on the

first intention. I think you had better take a walk. It'll do you good."

"I think I had better remain until we hear from Sheriff Jones. You understand the conditions, I think."

"Sure, Mr. Gould, you are doing the right thing, and I'll have the pleasure of telling John Crosby that he had better come up and take lessons in honor of you. But here comes the Squire. Good-morning, Squire! I have the youngster up. He is strong enough to go to jail now, if Jones comes after him."

The Squire shook hands with Gould, saying, "I have had a word from the constable this morning, and he has verified what you said to his satisfaction. Mr. Sapient has mysteriously disappeared, taking with him two hundred dollars he had borrowed of Mr. Crosby. There is a strong suspicion that Sapient knows more about the bank robbery than he would be willing to tell."

"Mr. Gray," said Gould, "I thank you for the thoughtfulness that led you to bring me this good news thus early. And now, Dr.

Finnegan, when do you think that I will be able to work?"

"Work, is it?" said the astonished doctor.
"Thought you had money."

"I have a little, but not enough to warrant my remaining in idleness. I can pay you, doctor, this morning. I must confess my surprise at finding so excellent a doctor so far removed from a city."

"Do you hear that, Squire Gray? Faith, he has as fine tongue as he has head. As for my bill, Mr. Gould, we will let that go as a present. I'll come to-morrow and dress your head and make your better acquaintance. Top of the morning to you. You are all right to work a little any time, but don't get overheated."

Gould found himself alone with the Squire. He had been greatly impressed with him the day before. There were some things he was anxious to know, and here was a man who could tell him.

"Mr. Gray," he began, "I desire to ask you a few questions. If I unwittingly ask any

that you do not care to answer, directly or indirectly, I will so construe it by your silence and desist."

"I shall be pleased to answer any question you will probably ask me."

"Thanks. My first question is this. Has Mr. John Crosby had unfortunate experiences with tramps?"

"Yes, rather so. Something like a year ago a tramp forced himself into the house in the day time, frightened the women into getting him a regular meal, ate all he wanted, and then helped himself to some clothing and other things, and started away. But John Crosby and Jim Gramme came out of the field just in time to catch him. Gramme took away the stolen goods, and ran him down into the road, after shaking him up in good shape, but Crosby wasn't satisfied. He loosed the dog, Lion (a savage brute), and set him onto the man. Gramme said the dog would have killed him if he hadn't gone to the man's rescue and dragged him off. As it was, the man was severely hurt, and he went away swearing ven-

geance. He came up here, and Dr. Finnegan, pitying him (for he has got a heart as big as an ox), cauterized the wounds, got the man some clothes, and sent him away apparently no worse for his experience. The next night John Crosby's barn was burnt, down near the river. A few days later his fine carriage horse was found with his tail cut off close to the body, and on Crosby's doorstep was found a piece of paper on which was scrawled, 'I am after you, you brute!' and signed 'Avenger.' From that day Crosby has regarded tramps with a fear amounting almost to terror, and I suppose that will account for his unwarranted treatment of you."

"Very likely, very likely. I thought at the time that there was more fear than rage in his manner. Under the circumstances, I am not surprised. I shall bear him no ill will."

"This is very commendable in you," said the Squire.

"What relation does my host, the Major, as they call him, bear to John Crosby? Do I understand they are brothers? There is not

the least resemblance, but from something I heard I conclude there is some relation."

"They are half-brothers, but only in name is there any resemblance. The mother of Major Crosby was a very refined but a very delicate woman. She was the second wife of John's and Daniel's father. She induced her husband to give Daniel a college education, for which he was to yield up one-half of his patrimony to John at the time of his father's death. When about halfway through his college course the war broke out and he enlisted. He was shot through the lungs at Cold Harbor, and returned to find his father and mother in their graves and his brother in possession of the property. He soon found that he was unwelcome at his old home, and that his brother did not propose to give up any part of the property belonging to the Major. 'Major Dan,' as his neighbors call him, shrunk from the disgrace of a family quarrel. He secured the position of principal at our academy at Greensburg, and for twenty years taught there. Gradually his health broke down, the

wound showed signs of reopening, he had several attacks of hemorrhage, and the doctor informed him that he could not live if he continued in the academy."

After a moment's pause, Gould asked, hesitatingly, "Are they very poor, Mr. Gray?"

"Yes, they are poor in this world's goods, but very happy in each other. The grace and beauty of the Major's children is the boast of our little town. Have you seen Mrs. Crosby?"

"I have not. She went away before I was called to breakfast, but the young lady whom Major Crosby calls his housekeeper is strikingly graceful and attractive."

The Squire noticed that he made no mention of Lois, although he knew that Gould could not be unmindful of what she had done for him the day before. After a while the Squire continued: "I suppose you will be interested to know more about Major Crosby and his family. Somehow it is borne in upon me to tell you that their situation is trying, almost pitiable. The Major tries to be brave, but

there is despair in his eyes, for his wife is slowly breaking down. You see, Mr. Gould, the story is this: The Major married Miss de Neumoirs, who was a teacher of French in the academy. Her father was a French engineer and had married an English girl, much against the will of his parents. But love will have its way, and so the young people married and came to Canada, where he found lucrative employment. After a while their daughter was born. When she was eighteen word came from his parents in France that if he would return and bring his family all would be forgiven. The ship they sailed on never was heard from again. Their daughter, who had been well educated and was an accomplished musician, had been left in America in order that she might graduate from the convent where she was at school. Her father had left some property, but it was nearly all lost in passing through the hands of dishonest lawyers. She saw an advertisement for a French teacher in the academy at Greensburg. She applied for and secured the position. The

Major loved her, married her, and the union has been blessed with three children. Are you interested?"

"More than I can tell you," said Gould.
"Will you continue?"

"Well, I think I'd better," he said, noting the intense interest in the face of Gould. "The Major always loved Sunny Point. He had money enough to buy this little farm and about a hundred acres of woodland, and build a very comfortable frame house. But he wanted to own all the land to the lake, and partly around it, so he mortgaged his place to his brother to raise the money to buy the woodland. He hadn't been a month in his new home when it caught fire and burned. They saved most of the furniture, including the books and piano, but it nearly crushed the Major. It brought on a hemorrhage and his life was despaired of. His wife went back to teaching. Albert, who was preparing for college, went on the drive as timekeeper and general clerk. Lois went to work for her uncle, caring for their crippled boy and helping her aunt, her

wages going towards the interest account. I meant to tell you that the neighbors all got together and in about sixty days put up this fine log house. One gang would work two days; and the next, two days; and so they worked until the family could move in. And between you and me, I think it just as comfortable as the frame house, but a great many town folks think it's a great come-down to the Major and his family to live in a log house. I learned yesterday that the Major hasn't been able to pay the interest on the thousand dollars he borrowed from John Crosby, for two years, and that John has sold the mortgage to a man in Greensburg, who will show no mercy to the Major. The Major is a man who will never whine or complain. He will go down to poverty and want without a whimper, as far as he is concerned; but it is the thought of his family that is worrying him to death."

"Will not his brother come to his rescue? Is it possible that he would see the Major driven out of his home?"

"You'd think so, wouldn't you," replied the

Squire, "seeing that John Crosby is the richest man in our county, and in a good many ways a rather good citizen? But for some unaccountable reason he seems to bear the Major a grudge, and do what the Major can, he cannot soften John's heart towards him. Some day there will be a reckoning, and John may repent his course towards the Major."

The Squire arose, and so did the listener. The old man, as if he felt he had told more than he should, said to Gould, "I hope you will consider this confidential, sir. My respect and sympathy for the Major, and his family, has led me to say too much, I fear—to—to—a—excuse me, a stranger."

Gould extended his hand, and said, "To a stranger, indeed; but I ask you to trust him, even as you did yesterday."

CHAPTER IV

AFTER dinner that day Gould said to his host, "The doctor thinks that it would do me good to take a walk. Where would you recommend that I go?"

"You keep the road that follows the stream until you come to the falls; there you will find a log bridge. Cross this bridge and take the right hand road that leads into the woods up the hill. If you follow this road about a mile you will come to our beautiful lake. Our land extends to the south shore. We think it is very beautiful."

"Where does the other road lead?"

"Down to our intervalle farm, where I am trying to make a little hay."

"Are you working alone?"

"Yes, but I am accustomed to it. If I were strong I could get along very well. When you return I will have your trunk here. I hope

you will excuse me for not going with you. You know we must 'make hay while the sun shines.' Did you hear from Constable Jones?"

"Yes. Mr. Gray came down to inform me that the constable was satisfied that I am not the man they want. It's quite an odd experience in my life to be held up for assault and robbery. You say that the left hand road leads to your farm?"

"Yes, but there is nothing interesting there."

The dinner was very acceptable to Gould. Madeline presided at the table with the dignity and grace of a woman, although to this man of the world she was but a child. She had bowed when he entered, but did not speak save in reply to some remark of her father. Gould thought he could discover that, young as she was, she was sharing the load of care and anxiety that depressed the father. What could he do? Something must be done to remove the shadow of the boding cloud that hung over this worthy family.

As they rose from the table Gould said,

"I will see you a little later in the day, Mr. Crosby."

"Yes," said the Major, "I shall come up from the intervalle early, possibly before you get back from your walk. You will find the woods road and the lake tempting. When you are a little stronger, I will furnish you with a fishing outfit, and you can amuse yourself while you are gaining strength. Below the falls there is good fishing. Do you ever fish?"

"A little, but I am not an expert."

Gould passed out of the door and down through the tall pines till he was quite out of sight of the house, and throwing himself under the shadows of a great beech began to think.

The words of the Major ran through his mind: "When you are stronger I will furnish you with a fishing outfit, and you can amuse yourself while you are regaining your health." Was he dreaming? Should he awake to find that he had only in his dreams met the one unselfish man; a man over whom there hung a cloud black with adversity? One in whose face there stared stalking poverty and the wolf of

want, and who was whelmed about with nearly every misfortune that a man could be subject to? Yet this good soul could feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and bind up the wounds of the afflicted as did the Samaritan of old. How mean in comparison with this sweet spirit seemed all the men and women he had known in his station in life! In these woods had been bred one lofty soul, one brave spirit with something of an angel's love, with something of a god-like charity. Such a product was wealth enough to come from these environing woods to grace a State. Had he been sent by some divine agency to succor this brave family? The thought took possession of him. It seized him like a phantasy. He must do something. What, he did not know, but "something, something," he murmured as he moved through the woods towards the stream.

As he walked, he thought of his strange friend, Lionel Sharpe, the cold, stern man who had lost all faith in woman, and who believed that an unselfish and sincere man might exist, but he had never met him. Many times a mil-

lionaire, Sharpe stood at the head of one of the great financial houses in New York. Outwardly cold and stern, he repulsed most men, but Gould knew that within there was a heart that was kind and pitying, that took note of the sufferings of humanity, and that while his name did not appear upon any list of published charities, yet relief had come to many a sufferer through sources unknown, unsuspected. Between him and Gould a strange friendship existed. The occult grace and goodness of Sharpe, Gould had discovered long ago. The real nobleness of the man hidden under the frigid exterior he had found, and Sharpe in turn had given his young friend his rare confidence. What a discovery would be the character of Major Daniel Crosby to Lionel Sharpe! He would be a *rara avis* of the human family. That night a letter was sent from Falling Water to Lionel Sharpe—and it contained a revelation.

The Major was tired. He had worked hard that day, and had nearly exhausted his strength. He saw that a shower was coming

up and that his well-made hay would be wet before he could possibly house it. For the first time in his life he felt his courage failing. He could see no escape from the dreadful net of circumstances that entangled him. How would it end? Must his dear home go? Must he be driven out, his family scattered, and he become a wanderer on the face of the earth? From his brother he could hope for nothing, and if not from a brother, from whom?

He sank upon the soft hay and gave up in despair.

"Mr. Crosby, what is the matter? Have you heard bad news?" said a voice that he recognized as Gould's.

"Oh no, oh no! You rather took me by surprise. You see I am getting kind of old, and maybe a little childish; and we all have our troubles."

"Yes, yes, Mr. Crosby, but I fear that you have more than your share. I have come to help you. You get on the hay rack and see me play with this hay. I'll bury you up if you are not careful."

"You must not! You must not! You are not strong."

"Strength is the one thing I boast of. Don't I look strong?"

The Major gazed upon Gould's splendid physique, as he said, "You look capable of doing anything that requires right and might."

"Well, let me prove it."

He helped the Major clamber over the low rail of the rack, and then he fell to pitching the hay, which came so fast that the Major had to call to him to desist. "You'll smother me. Why, you're a giant," and for the first time Gould heard a note of cheerfulness in his voice. Every spear of hay went in dry. Gould sent his host to the house while he took care of the horse and "chores" about the barn. At the supper table he met Mrs. Crosby. He saw at once the source of that peculiar grace which he had noted in Madeline, and heard again the notes of that voice which had so strangely affected him, and which he had tried to forget.

Mrs. Crosby looked very tired. She thanked

our hero for his services to her husband that day, but urged him to be careful of himself until he was secured in his strength. Asking to be excused she retired to her room in another wing of the house to study, as she said.

"Did you go to the lake?" inquired the Major of Gould.

"Only to the falls, sir. I noticed that a shower was coming up, and I thought I would help you save your hay."

"And you did save it. I never could have done it alone."

"Mr. Crosby," said Gould, in a tone that had something of determination in it, "I shall remain and help you get your hay. Don't protest. I owe you more than you dream of. Pardon me, but I must insist on this one thing, and you must allow me to do what I feel is the right thing."

This was Thursday, and on the following Saturday all of the hay was safely stored in the log barn, and the Major's unusual cheerfulness was noted by all.

Major Crosby and his new friend worked

together for three days, talking on many subjects, each finding in the other surprising wells of thought and charm of character; but not once did the Major ask from whence he came, who he really was, or for what purpose he was among them, and Gould vouchsafed no word of information regarding his life or history.

A strange content had fallen upon him. What did it mean? He had scarcely spoken to anyone, save the Major, since the day the Squire had told him that pitiful story. His quick eye had taken in the beauty of the surroundings. Peace seemed to nestle at Sunny Point, and the rough home to welcome him. In his room he had discovered a violin. He had opened the case, expecting to find only the most ordinary instrument, but to his surprise his artist eye detected those marks which so clearly indicate an instrument of the highest quality. It was a Guillaume.

Gould was an artist. While yet a child a violin had been placed in his hands. That love of music which was native in his blood had been cultivated by the best teachers, and he

reveled in the thought that some day, possibly to-morrow, which was Sunday, he would play to his heart's content. He knew that it was the intention of the family to attend church in Greensburg, four miles below, to hear the son of their neighbor, Elijah Fessenden, preach his initial sermon. This should be his opportunity to pour out his soul through that instrument, whose unaccountable presence passes all understanding.

The Sunday came. At the breakfast the family were all present save Lois, who had returned to her uncle's from a sense of duty that she considered was due her Aunt Martha, but possibly more impelled by her love for the beautiful crippled boy, who clung to her as to an older sister. She not only waited upon him with all the tenderness of her nature, but she was his teacher. She loved to watch the gradual unfolding of the child mind under her tuition.

There was one thing in the world that John Crosby loved. Little Joey was his idol. For him the stern voice would soften; for

him the touch of the strong hands was gentle; for him the severe expression of his face would melt into kindness, and the hard blue eyes glow with the passion of love. The child held the cords of all that was best in the soul of John Crosby. To do him justice, he was not unkind in his immediate family. He had married a woman twenty years his junior, and this little son was the result of that wedlock. The child had been a cripple from birth, but there looked out from his beautiful eyes a fair spirit that had seemed to come into this world to win from the soul of his stern father a love which to none other was manifest.

At nine o'clock on Sunday morning the Major, his wife, and Madeline, started to attend church in Greensburg. Gould had been invited to go with them but had declined.

There was quite a delegation from Falling Water that went to hear the son of their neighbor, Lige Fessenden, preach. They had been pleased with his trial sermon, and had installed him as pastor of the First Congregational

Church, and he was to preach his first sermon as a settled pastor before his people. Falling Water was profoundly interested in him, beside being very proud of the fact that their little town had furnished Greensburg a minister.

Gould's opportunity had come. When he had seen the carriages roll through the bridge he went back, took out the violin, and proceeded to put it in order. He found the bridge down, and two of the strings broken. He had provided himself from the Squire's stock with a full set, such as they were. He spent much time in getting the instrument in order. He then went into the living-room, which also served for the dining-room, and began to run over the instrument, extemporizing in that free and brilliant manner of which only an artist is capable. He then stopped and looked about the room. How ample it was. The huge brick fireplace was piled full of green yellow birch, laid up in artistic order, with the kindling wood beneath, ready to be fired whenever the need came.

Gould had been surprised to see so many

good books arranged in order on the home-made shelves, but he remembered their owner had been a teacher and that this would account for their presence. There were no pictures on the walls, but the four windows, low and wide, draped in dainty dimity, framed in pictures beautiful and always changing—pictures beyond the power of any artist to produce.

On the northeast one saw the wooded slopes of the mountain side, with its soft surging blanket of varying green. As one moved about the room the picture changed in scope and depth, with its perspective. On the west, etched in its dainty frame, was a little clearing—the garden plot of the home—in the very center of which, dominating everything, a great boulder stood, that ages ago had dropped from the frozen floor of a wandering iceberg. The warm sun shone down on the young corn, peas and beans, the tender squash plant, and growing tubers, all showing that they had been cared for by some toiler who loved them as much for their beauty as for their utility. On the southwest was a window picture of rugged

grandeur, revealing the precipitous side of a rocked-ribbed mountain, that frowned upon the valley beneath in stern benignity. Its strength was not hostile, but suggestive of power. The scattering spruce and hemlock clinging here and there to its shaggy brow added a bristling severity to its stony face. To those who loved it, it conveyed no menace, but stood a guardian of the fair valley below. The picture looking towards the river on the south-east was entrancing. A level green extended from the house to the shores of the singing river that eddied directly in front of the home, where the waters seemed to pause a moment as if in gentle obeisance, then glided out, and on and on to the sea.

Beyond the stream, appearing here and there above the clustering groves, could be seen the roofs of the homes of neighbors living in the suburbs of Greensburg. The ever-changing seasons qualified these living pictures, and banished from that home all need of the graphic art, for a painter greater than a Turner was constantly touching with nature's masterful

brush the uncopied pictures in this humble home.

The nature of Gould was artistic. The compelling beauty that lay upon every hand was refashioning the man of society. Nature had found response in this soul. She knew and claimed her own. But there first must be a new birth, and that parturition was at hand.

How long Gould played he never knew. He sketched many airs from the grand operas, then he would extemporize, playing as if in a frenzy. He could not stop. The violin seemed bewitched. On and on he played, and at last, as if in answer to his thoughts, the violin floated into that pathetic and matchless air, Gottschalk's "Last Hope." He forgot everything. All the trouble and sadness of his young life he poured into that marvelous composition. His soul was crying out through the violin. Tears came to his eyes, with the last sweet strains. He sank upon the great lounge with the violin still clutched in his hands, and the long pent-up emotion found relief in tears.

"What is it, Mr. Gould? What is it?"

cried a voice at the door, which he knew was Crosby's.

He started up and saw Madeline and her father and mother standing at the wide door, and a little back of them, tall and beautiful but calm and unmoved, the girl who had bowed over him in protecting pity at John Crosby's well.

Little Madeline's hands were held up almost to her face, and she seemed to be wringing them, while from the eyes of the father tears were slowly falling, as he said, "Oh, Mr. Gould, who are you? What is this mystery? You have come to us as Carlyle said of Emerson, like an angel."

Mrs. Crosby advanced and said, half apologetically, "Did you know we were sitting upon the porch and listening to you?"

Gould had partly recovered himself, and managed to say, "I certainly did not hear you come. I must have played a long time. May I ask who owns this violin?"

"It's Lois's," replied Madeline. "It was Grandfather de Neumoir's. He left it when he went away to Paris, and he never returned."

Gould glanced at Lois and said quietly, "Do you play?"

"Very little, sir," replied the girl. "I never had a teacher, and what little I know I learned from books."

Gould turned to the father and in an impressive manner said, "This is a very old and valuable instrument. Have you any idea of its worth?"

"Why," volunteered Madeline, "Uncle John said it was worth about ten dollars, and said he would allow us twenty-five dollars towards the interest account for it, if Lois would teach Joey what she knew, when he was older."

Gould turned sharply, and addressing Lois said, "Does your uncle know anything about the value of violins?"

"I think not," replied the girl. "But he has been trying to buy it for some time. It has been in my mother's family so long we do not wish to part with it, unless—unless we are obliged to."

"Miss Lois, don't sell it. But if the time

ever comes when you feel you must part with it, I have a friend who will gladly give you a thousand dollars for it; for, in my opinion, it is a genuine Guillaume."

"A thousand dollars! A thousand dollars!" cried Lois and Madeline in chorus. "You cannot mean it!" said Lois. "Why, that would pay off the mortgage on our home and send poor father South. Do you mean it, Mr. Gould? Do you mean it?"

"I do," replied Gould, in a tone that left no doubt of his sincerity. Lois advanced to her father and mother, who were standing near the fireplace, and said, "Oh! Now dear father and mother, I can do something for you. I will give it up; I will give up everything, all my hopes of some day being a violinist, if I can but save this dear home for you. I have an education. I can teach. I can do something. But let us first save the home. That will make me happy."

Then, turning to Gould, she said, "Are you quite sure? You could not be so cruel as to deceive us."

"Lois," said her father mildly, "can't you see that Mr. Gould is not deceiving us?"

The girl looked from one to the other for a moment, and then sank into her chair, sobbing as if her heart would break, and between her sobs said, "Oh! I am so happy, so happy!"

And Jay Gould had seen something in the soul and character of a woman that day that was to him a revelation.

CHAPTER V

AT the breakfast table next morning Gould surprised the Major by asking him if he had ever applied for a pension.

"Oh, yes. I made an application about three years ago through a pension agent in B—, but I have never received a dollar from the government. Every little while my lawyer sends me a request for a little more money, generally adding: 'I expect to hear any day that a private bill has been passed granting you a pension.'"

"Did you have any trouble in furnishing the evidence that was required?"

"No. My regiment was raised in this county, my colonel is still living, and many of my comrades are within fifty miles of this place."

"To what does your solicitor charge the delay?"

"He says my case comes under the private pension act, and that it requires considerable time as well as money to get certain influential congressmen to take up the matter at private sessions. I sometimes think, with my brother John, that I was born under an unlucky star, although I know this is a childish conclusion."

"Perhaps you have read what one of the poets has said on this subject: 'The world in its childhood was not wise, fearing the destinies of the stars.'"

"Tupper, I think."

"Quite right."

"With your permission, I would like to ask you a few more questions relating to your pension."

"I shall be pleased to answer."

"I believe you were wounded?"

"I was shot through the left lung at Cold Harbor."

"Were you in a government hospital?"

"I was, for nearly two months."

"Were you able to do any further service after that?"

"No. I was utterly unable to do anything for nearly seven months. My recovery was considered very doubtful."

"You have never fully recovered from your injury, I believe?"

"No, I never shall," said the Major sadly.

"Did you provide your pension agent with these facts?"

"Certainly. I had no trouble whatever in proving them. Why do you ask?"

"Pardon me, but one or two more questions, and then I will tell you. Did you give your pension agent power of attorney to receive and receipt for your pension when it came?"

"Yes, he said he would cash it and send me the money. You don't think there is anything wrong about it, do you?"

"Major Crosby, this is what I think: Your agent is a scoundrel. No honest solicitor would have asked for a power of attorney from a client who lived as near to him as you. Your case is very simple. Nothing could be better established than your service and your disabilities. Kindly give me your solicitor's name,

your full name, the dates of your enlistment and discharge, when and where you were wounded, the name of your colonel and two of the comrades. Do so at once and I will look into the matter."

The Major had been looking keenly at the young man. How capable he seemed. Was there anything he could not do? What was the secret, the mystery hanging over him? Would they ever know?

Crosby went into his wife's room, and in a few moments returned, handing Gould a paper on which he had answered all the questions, and a parchment roll that proved to be his discharge from the army.

"Will that suffice?"

"That would suffice to get a pension for any man in the United States without delay."

"You almost cause me to hope that I will get my pension."

"I think you will. May I ask if there is a telephone line to B——?"

"Yes, at Greensburg."

"That will do. How can I reach there un-

observed? There are reasons that you can understand," he continued, "why I would rather not have my presence known in that town just at present."

"I understand," replied the Major. "Did you ever handle a canoe?"

"I once belonged to a canoe club in New York, and I became moderately skillful as a canoeist."

The Major looked astonished as he said, "Have you no limitations?"

"I only wish that I could do one thing well," was the feeling reply. "I have played all my life, save when at college, and I played there too much."

"Come with me."

He followed the Major to the barn, the "hovel," as they say in the woods.

"Albert's canoe is in that last stall. We will put it into the water, and you can paddle down to the main river and from there to Greensburg. Stop at the old steamboat landing, and tell Mr. Snow that you want to leave it there while you go up town. At Weatherby's hard-

ware store you will find the long distance 'phone. My obligations to you are growing to serious proportions."

"We will not talk of that. The obligation is mine, not yours."

They put the canoe in the water. It took the Major but a moment to discover that Gould was no tyro. Just before his departure, Major Crosby said, "Mr. Gould, we are going to have a little company to-night. The minister at Greensburg, Mr. Fessenden, his father and mother, Squire Gray, and Mrs. Porter, his daughter, and Helen Porter, the Squire's granddaughter, and a few others are coming down to Sunny Point. We are going to have a little entertainment. My wife plays the piano and Madeline sings, and so does the minister. Would it be asking too much of you to play for us?"

"I will play," was the reply, as the canoe shot out from the shore, leaving the Major almost happy.

At seven o'clock Gould had not returned, but Madeline had left the table laid, and was

trying to keep his supper warm. At last he came in, looking quite cheerful. As he passed through the room, he stopped to remark to the Major, who could hardly retain his composure, "Major Crosby, I wish to congratulate you. Your pension, dating from the time of your application, three years ago, together with all the money that you have sent, with an extra two hundred dollars as the price of your silence, or agreement that you will not prosecute, will arrive on the train to-morrow morning. I had the man at a peculiar advantage, and will explain it later."

For the first time Gould, who was being watched by both Mrs. Crosby and Madeline, was seen to smile broadly, caused by the expression of open-mouthed astonishment on the face of the host. When they had recovered somewhat from their joyous surprise the Major was heard to say, "I thank God with all my heart that he has sent you to us, Mr. Gould."

The lips of the mother were seen to move as she offered in silence her thanks to God. But Madeline could not restrain herself. Moving

quickly to the side of Gould, she placed one of her hands upon his arm, and, looking at him with all her soul in her eyes, said in perfect sincerity, " You must be that wonderful Sherlock Holmes that we have read about. Aren't you?"

For a moment Gould looked into her wistful eyes, then sank into a chair and gave himself up for the first time in many a week to hearty, genuine, soul relieving laughter. As he rose to pass into his room, he said to his host, " I have heard a good many bon mots, but that remark of your daughter's excels them all."

A young man by the name of Link Lincoln—the Link was short for Lincoln, as he had been named by his eccentric father Lincoln Lincoln—came with the Squire and his family. He was a traveling salesman, witty, jolly, and talkative. He could sing, recite, and play the zither, without any great degree of skill but well enough to entertain his friends. He had a fund of stories, and seemed to be perfectly at home at the Major's and with all the guests.

It was some time after the guests had assembled before Gould made his appearance. He

was introduced by the Major. The entertainment began with a well-played piano solo by Madeline. Then Madeline and Mr. Lincoln sang a duet very acceptably, as Gould thought. Jake Cornish and his sister sang a duet, "Where is my wandering boy to-night?" A solo by Helen Porter showed but little training. The Major then asked Gould if he would play. Gould had seen an arrangement of the opera of "Martha" on the piano. Going to Mrs. Crosby he asked, "Do you play this arrangement?"

"I sometimes accompany Lois."

"Shall we try it?"

The playing of the opening chords of the opera was enough to convince him that this woman of the woods was no ordinary musician. He felt his blood tingle. At the close Mrs. Crosby arose and said, "Mr. Gould, do play alone. I must hear you alone. We must all hear you alone."

Gould swung around from the piano, raised the violin, and with his eyes drooping, began the weird and wonderful "Legendre."

Once or twice Lige was heard to groan, his face working with extraordinary emotion. Tears coursed down his cheeks under the influence of that wonderful playing. Muting the instrument Gould played "Sweet spirit, hear my prayer." Lige got up and went out, saying, "He'll break my old heart if I don't get away for a spell."

While Gould played his gaze was fixed unconsciously upon the dreamy face of Joey. It was not a stare, but a correspondence. He was playing to that little soul and it responded.

When the music ceased a silence fell upon them. Lois sat like a statue. Mrs. Crosby's face was all aglow. Lige had returned to his seat near the window, but no one was rude enough to break in upon the rapturous silence.

It was little Joey who spoke first. He got down from his aunt's lap and moving painfully towards Gould raised his hand and with the light of an angel on his face said, "Joey wants to tiss oo." For a moment Gould hesitated, but only for a moment. Laying the violin aside he reached down and gathered the boy



“ He was playing to that little soul and it responded ”

in his arms. Then laying his hand upon the golden head, Gould held it against his face tenderly.

Soon Joey raised his head, and looking into Gould's eyes, said with childish directness and simplicity, "Oo make Joey happy. I love oo."

Every heart in the room was touched. There was moisture in Gould's eyes when he placed the child in Mrs. Crosby's arms saying, "That boy has the soul and face of a Mendelssohn."

After placing the violin in its box, our hero asked to be excused. Another silence followed his retirement, which was broken by Lincoln saying to the blacksmith, "What makes you look so sober, Mr. Fessenden?"

"I am never merry when I hear sweet music, as Shakespeare says."

"Now, Mr. Lincoln, won't you play upon your zither?" said the Major, assuming a cheerful air.

"Well, not much," replied Lincoln bluntly. "Once in a while I have sense enough to keep still, and this is one of the times."

"Good for you," said Lige promptly.
"You've got more sense than usual."

"Why, father!" said Mrs. Fessenden to her husband reprovingly.

"I don't mean anything by that," said Lige.
"Just sort of complimentary, you know."

"Well, I am going out to hang my zither where the Jewish maidens hung their harps—on a willow tree. I am going to hang it high and let it stay there," said Lincoln.

The little party soon broke up. As they passed out Abram Fessenden, the young minister, turned to Mrs. Crosby and said, "Mrs. Crosby, I did not expect the great treat which you have afforded us. It has lifted up all our hearts. May I ask who is Mr. Gould?"

Mrs. Crosby replied, "We only know that he is a gentleman."

When Lois and Madeline had retired to their room, the younger sister said, "Did you see the tears in Mr. Gould's eyes when he put little Joey down?"

"Yes, dear," replied Lois.

"Wasn't Mr. Gould's face just beautiful

when he was playing? Do you know—do you know——” said the ingenuous girl, “that I wanted to kiss him too?”

“Why, Madeline, what would mother say if she should hear you?”

“I don’t care, Lois, that is the way I felt; and besides, he is twice my age. He made everybody look common, excepting father and the Squire. What a wonderful thing it would be,” she said meditatively, “for a girl—for a girl to have a sweetheart like Mr. Gould. But,” she added reflectively, “if he should die it would kill her.”

Madeline looked into her sister’s beautiful face and saw something there she could not interpret. She put her arms around her neck. “What is it, dearest? You are as pale as death, and your eyes look strange. Tell your little Madeline.”

Lois took the sweet girl in her arms and said, “Never mind, dear. I guess I am only a little excited.”

“Oh, Lois, it isn’t that; it isn’t that. It isn’t like you to get excited. What is it?”

"I will tell you. I was thinking of that violin, and that I had sold it for only a thousand dollars. It is worth millions, my little sister, millions."

In the morning Major Crosby was surprised to see his brother John drive up to the door with a jigger on which was his mowing machine.

"Is Lige Fessenden here?" he said.

"I have not seen him, John. What's the matter?"

"Matter enough. My machine is broken. I've got four men in the hay field and haven't hay enough down to keep 'em at work. The blacksmith at Greensburg is sick, Lige Fessenden's gone off somewhere and left his shop open and his fire burning. If you had had sense enough to learn a trade you might have been worth something to the community, and not a dependent on your wife and children. Where's your tramp? Has he gone? I heard he was a-fiddling in your house last night."

The Major had grown pale, and there was a dangerous light in his eye that boded ill for his brother, but a voice was heard saying: "The

tramp is still here, Mr. Crosby, and possibly he can help you."

John Crosby looked up to see a debonaire figure approaching. Could he believe his eyes? Was this the man he had hurled from his door-yard? Before him was the figure and face of a man of distinguished bearing; one that would command the respect of anyone at sight. Neither in manner nor voice was there a trace of resentment. Neither was there subserviency. John Crosby was surprised, but remarked:

"Are you the man that—that—" he hesitated.

"Yes, I am the man that you took for a tramp and ran out of your yard. When I learned what you had suffered at their hands I was not surprised that you were so greatly disturbed at my presence."

There was something about the man that checked all words of abuse or wrath. His calm indifference to all that Crosby had said and done was a new experience to him. Did this man know that he was the honorable John Crosby of Greensburg, the richest man in the

county? Where was the deference due to so important a personage?

Gould had walked around the jigger and discovered that the driving bar had been broken. He turned to the Major, and speaking as though John Crosby was not within hearing, quietly remarked, "I think if we can get into the blacksmith shop I can weld the bar. Blacksmithing was part of our training at Stephens Institute."

The honorable John looked relieved and surprised, but seemed at a loss what to say. Finally he said, "The shop is open, and if you can fix it; Mr.—"

"Tramp," said our hero with a faint smile.

"Yes, *tramp*, and I'll have you understand I haven't changed my mind on that score. But I am willing to pay anyone for doing this work, tramp or no tramp."

The wrath of the old man had flamed up again. Of late he had seemed to be in a constant state of eruption. Gould said nothing, but walked quietly behind the jigger until they reached the shop.

"Mr. Crosby, you will please roll the machine into the shop while I prepare the fire. You can take off the rod." Gould was in full command of the situation, and ordered Crosby about with unconscious authority that astonished the Major and two or three others who had been attracted to the shop by the appearance of the man that the whole town was talking about. The Major helped his brother roll the machine in, but could not help smiling to himself as he noted that John seemed at a loss what to say, his usual arbitrary manner being dropped. He was obeying, not giving orders.

Gould took the broken pieces of steel, and after measuring carefully placed them in the fire. He had donned a blacksmith's apron and laid aside his hat. He worked swiftly and deftly. His face seemed illumined as he struck the finishing blows upon the perfectly welded steel. Then, with the tongs, he placed the bar upon the floor between the two marks he had made to ascertain the exact length of the piece of iron.

"I think that will do, Mr. Crosby. You can put the machine together now."

Lige Fessenden had returned before Gould had given the finishing touches to his work. He had watched with amazement the skillful swedging of the bar as it was being drawn out to its proper length.

John Crosby did not notice Lige when he came, nor had he spoken to anyone, but there was a thunder cloud on his face.

Gould had thrown off his apron, and putting on his coat started out of the shop.

"How much do I owe for your trouble?" said John Crosby.

"You can settle with your brother. I am working for him now." And he went towards the bench under a great elm where Lige had a wash bowl and towel for "cleaning up."

The two brothers had watched the worker in silence. But how different were their feelings! The skill and certainty of action were to Daniel Crosby a triumph, a joy; to John, a rebuke, a mortification.

Gould's manner, as John Crosby thought,

of leaving the shop as soon as work requiring any skill had been finished, maddened the already irritated man. This was treatment to which the honorable John had not been accustomed. He expected men to defer to, not command, him. He knew that his brother was secretly enjoying the situation. This added to his vexation. He said nothing until the machine was loaded, and he had gathered up the reins to drive away. Then turning to his brother with his face set hard, and speaking loud enough for all to hear, said:

“Daniel, you have defaulted your interest account for two years. You haven’t paid a cent on the principal. You are practically a pauper. I am tired of waiting and bothering with you. I don’t want to turn you out myself, so I sold the mortgage to Sparks of B—, and you know what to expect. It’s all your fault. If you had a little of your father’s sense and less of your mother’s sentiment you wouldn’t be where you are. You can’t blame me.”

Gould heard every word. The Major sunk

down upon the great stone wheel, while the blood oozed slowly from his pale lips. The shock had brought on a hemorrhage.

The face of Lige was a study. His eyes fairly blazed. That a great struggle was going on within him was plain to be seen, but when Crosby picked up the lines and fired the parting shot the rage of Lige could no longer be controlled. Seizing the horse by the head, with his eyes on fire, and the great shaggy head trembling with fury, he shouted:

“ You miserable blank—blankety—blank brute! You ain’t fit to live. You blank scoundrel! You blankety—blank—yellow dog! There is no more mercy in you than there’s milk in a male tiger! Thar ain’t a man in the county, you blank—wolf, that hadn’t rather go to your funeral than a circus. Now get out of here, you pot-bellied rhinoceros! Don’t you ever come to my shop again. You proud, vain, heartless, senseless, old bear!”

John Crosby had not heard this last tirade. He had been awed by the fury of his old neighbor. Lige the First was on deck, and in

fighting trim, and Lige the Second was down. Out of breath Lige had just strength enough to say, "Damn his harstlet. I came nigh pulling him out of the wagon, and making a chowder out of him."

A voice at his side said: "Father, father, have you forgotten God?" He turned to behold the pale, pained face of his son Abram, the minister who had prayed with him the night before.

The blow had come at last, and at a time when Daniel Crosby was comforting himself with the thought that he was doing his brother a service, when he hoped that for this reason the strained relations that existed between them would be replaced by brotherly regard. But his hopes had turned to ashes, and left him standing there in dumb pain, his face gray with the agony of hopelessness and despair. Was his brother right? Would it have been better to have been a blacksmith, and secure a living, than a scholar swamped in poverty? As this thought came to him he had sunk upon the great stone, and burying his face in his

hands gave up to his unutterable woe. He was thinking only of his wife and children, not of the remorseless treatment of his brother.

He felt a hand upon his shoulder, and heard a voice: "Mr. Crosby, is it as bad as this?"

Without looking up the wretched man replied, "As bad as this."

In the heart of Gould there was both pity and indignation, but stronger than both was an iron determination that he would defeat the heartless purposes of John Crosby. Turning to his friend he was surprised to see that the Major was slowly raising blood.

"Major, what does this blood mean?"

"It's another hemorrhage. Take me home as soon as possible."

They reached the porch just as Mrs. Crosby came out of the house. One look and she knew what had happened.

"Daniel," she cried, in a voice of extreme solicitation. "Is it your lungs again?"

"Yes, dearest," said the Major calmly. "Send Madeline for the doctor."

The sick man had been laid upon the great

couch in the living room. His wife was bending over him when a step was heard in the kitchen. In another moment the door opened and Albert Crosby entered. His first surprised glance fell on Gould. Then seeing his father he rushed to his side and fell upon his knees and said in tearful tones: "What is it, father? What has happened? Have you been hurt?"

The father made no reply, but turned his head away as he tried to choke back the tears. The boy raised his eyes to his mother, and the mother replied: "It's another hemorrhage, Albert;" and there was a flash in her eyes as she continued, "and if he dies your Uncle John will be his murderer."

The doctor came and after a short examination decided that the hemorrhage was but slight; that the Major would soon get up, if he would only "keep down;" be a good loafer for a month.

Every member of the Crosby family looked relieved. Gould volunteered to say to the doctor that the mental wound was the most

serious. The mind must be relieved, and at once.

"Will you excuse me for a short time, my friends? Your son is here. He can minister to his father better than a stranger could."

"I cannot stay a minute after father's out of danger," replied Albert. "I promised to be back on the drive to-morrow. Saturday is the pay day, and much depends on that."

"Albert Crosby," said Gould determinedly, "I will take your place. You must stay here with your father. You give me an order to have your money sent here, and I will attend to it. I can start to-night. How far is the drive from here?"

"Fifteen miles up the East Branch."

"Will you write out what your duties are, and when I return from the little business I have with the Squire, I will look them over on my way up the river. My turn has come to do something for you. Everything has been done for me, while I was unknown to you all, and suffering."

Going directly to the post office he found Squire Gray alone.

"Is there any mail for me, Mr. Gray?"

"Yes, and also a big express package for Major Crosby."

"It's probably his pension money," said Gould. "There should be upwards of a thousand dollars."

"I heard from the lawyer in B—— this morning, Mr. Gould. He says that all the papers will be on the train to-night, addressed to me, and when I have received the money I am to turn them over."

Gould had been opening his mail as they talked.

"I have here, Mr. Gray, a draft for one thousand dollars on New York. I will sign it over to you. I think the mortgage and interest is less than nine hundred dollars. You can use this until Mr. Crosby is ready to pay over to you from his pension money the amount you will have to take out of this. Say nothing to the family until after my departure. Their son, Albert, has returned. He felt obliged to

go back as soon as his father was out of danger. I shall take his place. He thinks the drive will pass here before a week, when I will see you again. I think you understand, Mr. Gray."

And before the good Squire could reply Gould moved swiftly away. Going to his room he selected a few articles of clothing, and calling Albert told him briefly the arrangement the Squire had made with the lawyer, charging him to say nothing until he had started, when Albert gasped out, "But where did the money come from?"

"The pension money has come." Gould moved towards the door, and as he passed out said: "I am to follow the river road to S—, am I not?"

"Yes, but—"

"Commend me to your father and mother. Good-day." And he was off.

That night about eight o'clock Squire Gray came to the house at Sunny Point, and placed in the hands of Major Crosby papers which made Sunny Point his, free from all incum-

brances; also a package of money amounting to nearly eleven hundred dollars.

"When you are ready, Major," he said, with a joyous look in his eyes, as he saw the great hope illumine the face of his friend, "when you get through handling it you can send me eight hundred and sixty-two dollars and twenty cents, to settle the principal and interest of the mortgage."

"But here the papers are all signed and executed. Who advanced the money?"

"Why, as John Crosby says, 'The tramp.'"

"I shall get well now, Squire Gray," said the Major with the ring of joy in his voice.

That night Hope had spread her white wings over Sunny Point, and in Madeline's prayer God heard a petition for her father's life and well-being.

After the other men had departed from his shop the eyes of Lige Fessenden and his son met. In those of the son was a sad and gentle rebuke, while in the face of the father was a wild confusion, followed by a groan of morti-

fication. Then the face hardened and another form of anger appeared. With determination marked on every feature he passed into the shop, seized the black green-hide, which was sometimes used on refractory horses, came out and started for the main highway. His son sprang in front of him crying, "Father, father! Don't look that way! God will forgive you if you will only ask him."

"Stand aside, my boy," said the father. "*God* may forgive, but I can't. Lige the First must be punished, but his shame shall not be seen of men. Don't follow me." He strode on, leaving his son and neighbors in dumb and pitying helplessness.

He was heard to growl to himself as he passed along the level way, before reaching the foot of the long hill that began at the edge of the woods.

Abby Smart had seen him pass. "I do declare," she said to herself, "if Lige Fessenden isn't going by a-talking to himself like a lunatic. I wonder if he is having one of his spells. Jest see him whack himself with that

'ere whip! He is one of the most unaccountable men I've ever seen. He ought to be put in a lyceum."

Lige the Second was indeed having it out with Lige the First. As soon as he entered the woods he began:

"So you miserable, good for nothing rascal, you took advantage of me, didn't you? You knew I had lost my cow, and that my wife Sarah was sick, and that I wasn't feeling well myself, and you just laid for me."

Thwack! went the black whip around his poor old legs.

"That makes you wince, don't it? Well you deserve it, you betrayer of the Lord! You tempter! Did you think I'd overlook it, and because old John Crosby was as nasty as pisen you thought I would excuse you, hey? Well, I won't. There is no excuse before the Lord for such vile blasphemy. Wake up there, go along, you beast." Thwack! went the whip again over the shoulders.

"Makes you puff, don't it, old Lige? Good enough for you. I'll give you a lesson you

won't soon forget. You loose-mouthed old reprobate! You want to rest, do you? Well, you didn't give the Lord any rest for nigh on to fifteen minutes, and you passed His holy name around among men with as little regard for it as you would for Bige Crabtree's. Ye can't hardly stand, can you? Go on though, go on, or I'll baste you again. You had no mercy for the old man that wants to do right when you got the reins between your teeth and started in on your own account. You can't hardly stand, can you? You're reeling around like a drunken man. You're mighty willing to promise great things now. You'll do better, will you? You sacrilegious, blasphemous old backslider!"

Lige had reached the summit of the long hill. He had with merciless determination forced himself up, and had kept up a constant stream of the most violent haranguing against himself. He had not spared the whip. When the summit was reached the poor old man sank exhausted beside the road, murmuring pitifully:

"My punishment is greater than I can bear."

Abram knew him too well to follow him at once. He hurried to the Squire's, fortunately found him in, and told the story.

"Poor father will, I fear, kill himself. He has had a terrible falling out with Lige the First, as he calls himself at times, and there is no telling to what extent he may punish him. Come with me, Mr. Gray, and let us go after him."

Bige Crabtree, who brought the mail from the station to the post office, drove up as they were talking. The Squire told him to help Helen distribute the mail, jumped on the buck-board with the minister, and drove rapidly away. They found poor Lige quite insensible and breathing heavily, still grasping the cruel whip. There was a look of extreme suffering on his rugged features. His son jumped out, gathered the poor old head in his arms, and said: "Poor, poor father! The good Lord would not have punished you as you have punished yourself. You don't deserve this, dear

old dad. Your sins shall be made as white as snow. From this hour I will devote my life, my strength, and my prayers, to my father on earth, that my Father in heaven may bless us both."

His son continued to rub his head and face while the Squire chafed his hands and wrists. Lige soon recovered consciousness, but spoke no word. He was taken to his home and laid upon his bed, while the old wife hung over him begging him to speak to her. "Call me Sarah, Elijah. Never mind whether it is Elijah First or Second, only call me Sarah."

For three or four days Lige kept his bed. Then he got up and was about the house several days before he went to the shop. His son came back to his old home every night, reading the Bible and praying with his old parents before retiring.

When Lige did finally appear he was a changed man, and while at times his wrath would rise and the old fire come into his eyes he never was heard again to take the Lord's name in vain.

CHAPTER VI

THE great drive of the East Branch was between Crawford's Falls and Salmon stream, which is on the main river. Gould was to follow the river until he came to the camp fires at the head of the drive. He was to report either to Mr. Lambert, who was the contractor of the drive, or to Cummings, who was boss of the head boats.

Before he had reached the mouth of the Salmon stream darkness had settled on the woods. He had enjoyed his walk, for it had given him the exercise in which he most delighted. He was alone, and in the primal woods. The great, sweet woods! He could hear the river as it rolled over its rocky bed singing of its freedom and joyous life. The great trees appeared friendly, and it seemed to him that they bestowed their benedictions on him. From out of their aisles came the extract of the breath of the forest, charged with a perfume,

a hope, a strength, a life-giving energy—an air which one finds only in the deep woodland. He was almost happy. What cared he for wealth in gold and houses, when this sweet-scented atmosphere was his for the breathing? One could live here always and never know want nor care nor tears, and when the end came it would be an euthanasia, a dying as unconscious of death as of birth. How "flat, stale and unprofitable" seemed all the usages of city life compared with this Elyseum in the midst of the brotherhood of trees! And then he thought of the family he had left on the shores of the river, made happy by his helping. He thought of the glad surprise of the tired mother when she should come back to her home that night; of health and hope restored to his friend the Major. He thought, against his will, of the bright light in the shining eyes of little Madeline. Then another face, the face of her who bent over him at the roadside, and in pitying accents had said: "Are you tired, sir. Can I help you?" Could such a face be false and faithless?

The night had fallen. The trees blended in thick-skirted darkness along the lonely road. Now and then the wood owl sent out his almost human cry, disturbed in his night watching by the intruder. A little wind had arisen and moaned through the tree tops, but to him it was only a strain of sweet music played on the furry pipes of the spruce and pine. It only served to soothe him and bring him into accord with the wholesomeness of that nature which environed him. By and by he heard voices calling in excited tones. The road approached the river very closely, and as he came around a long bend in both the river and the road he saw for the first time the camp fires of the river drivers on Penobscot's waters.

He was soon able to descry two or three large tents, and around a great fire near one of them a group of men, some sitting, some standing, and a few lying down with their heads resting on a log for a pillow, their wet clothes steaming like a teakettle.

As Gould moved into the light the men stopped talking and looked at him. Near the

main fire a second fire was burning in a sort of a pit, known among lumbermen as the "bean hole." A man with a long maple pole was poking the coals as Gould appeared. No one spoke, and Gould looked about to discover a man he thought might be Lumbert or Cummings. Nothing about any of the men distinguished them as a possible boss. The one with the fire hook was doing something, and it occurred to Gould that he might give him some information. He inquired if Mr. Lumbert or Mr. Cummings was about. The cook, Ben Eastman, turned his head to look at the questioner and without any seeming surprise or interest continued his work saying in an indifferent tone:

"Yeas, Lumbert and Cummings are both in the wall tent, jest above the second fire. Lumbert hurt his arm to-day. Can't do much. He is meaner than a b'ar in the trap. Bad time to see him if you want work. Here you, Frenchy, go up and show him the boss's tent."

This was addressed to the "cookee," a bright French boy about eighteen, named Henri

Fornier. The boy jumped up, motioning Gould to follow him.

"You come me. I show boss, Cummings he too. I run queek back. Old Boss shoat mouth Frenchy, swear awful. Ev'y time see heem."

The handsome face of the French boy attracted Gould at once, and when they had passed beyond the hearing of the men, he asked, "What is your name?"

"Henri Fornier. Me new on drive. Cook he damn me; so do Boss she damn me; ev'y body damn me. No hurt Henri. Good Henri, but damn me."

"Do you know Albert Crosby?"

"Oui, oui; he good man homeseek. Likum pere, likum mere. Go see them queek; come much queek back," and pointing his finger at a group near the tent, he said: "Dat de boss, Cummings he stan', boss he down. Boss ver' mad. Bad time hire out. I go back. *Bon nuit, Monsieur,*" and in another moment he was out of sight.

Lumbert was evidently out of sorts. One

arm was bandaged below the elbow, and as he talked he held it with the other hand as if it pained him.

“ Cummings, you are too slow. You ought to be half way back to the rear boats instead of standing around growling about your men. I expect the upper drive is hung up, and hell’s to pay. I wonder what Crosby wanted to go back for, just when I needed him most. He would go and he is too good a man for me to discharge. Said he would be back to-morrow. The accounts are getting all mixed up, and I can’t keep them straight. And you don’t know a damn thing about it, Cummings. I wonder why you can’t get a man that can work and think too—a regular double ender. When a man can think he can’t do anything else, and if he can do anything he can’t think nor see five minutes ahead. Well, what have we got here?”

At that moment Gould had come into the fire light just outside the tent. The great bulk of Cummings slowly swung around as he heard the footsteps behind him. Lambert

had raised himself up, and was looking out from under his shaggy eyebrows at Gould. There was something in the reclining man that caused Gould to recognize in him the "Old Boss." He wore a stiff beard trimmed quite close to the face, the mouth was large but drawn in a perfectly straight line, the hair a dark gray and the beard and mustache the same. The eyes were blue and unquailing as an eagle's; the voice was rough and strong, but under it there was a note not unkind.

Cummings was a tall powerful man with a long face, and rather cold light-blue eyes. He was almost a giant in proportions, and in manners he was undemonstrative. He was the boss of the rear, whom all his men feared, for as Lambert had said of him, "He can choke the meanness out of a Canuck, drown an Injun, and fight any four Irishmen to a standstill."

"Is this Mr. Lambert?"

"Yes, what do you want? Damn funny time for a man to come here, in the dead of night. Got any whisky, stranger?"

This was a salutation that was new to Gould. He said nothing, but handing Lambert a letter from Albert Crosby, said: "I think that will explain who I am and what I am here for."

"Damn it all, read it all yourself. I got a sore arm, lame foot, my head aches, the drive is acting like the devil, Cummings is like a bear with his foot in a trap, and I don't feel well myself. But, I say, sonny, you are a pretty one, ain't you?"

"Is this Mr. Cummings?" said Gould.
"Won't you read it?"

"Cummings read!" broke in Lambert.
"He can't read nothing. He is a jambuster, and a good one, but he can't read writing."

Cummings took no notice of what his chief said, but going nearer the fire read as follows:

MR. CHARLES LUMBERT.

DEAR SIR: This will introduce to you Mr. Jay Gould, who insists on taking my place upon the drive. My father has been very sick and is still quite feeble. Mr. Gould is a man whom you can thoroughly trust, I believe. We have the utmost confidence in him. He is

a stranger to river driving but I dare say he will prove capable of all things that were required of me. I shall return at an early date. Yours very truly,

ALBERT CROSBY.

"Hear that, Cummings. Right on top of all my other troubles I am sent a green man who looks as though he had just been run out of a Boston laundry. What can you do, any way? Can you fiddle?"

"Yes."

"He fiddles! Well, he can't do anything else, if he fiddles. Can you keep accounts?"

"Yes."

"Can you reckon up interest on twenty-five cents at five and three-quarters per cent, for ten years? About the time we have to wait for the Penobscot Log Driving Association to pay us."

"Yes."

"Can you bore a three-inch hole through a log?"

"Yes."

"Well, you are good at yes-ing. Perhaps you can weld a broken chain," he said with a grim smile.

"I can."

"You can mend a chain?"

"Yes; I am a blacksmith by trade."

"Do you hear that, Cummings? He is a blacksmith, and look at those hands! I think I will have to revise my opinion of you. Well, here goes another: Can you paddle a canoe or row a boat?"

"Both."

"Can you handle a peavy?"

"I don't know what a peavy is."

"Thank God, you don't know everything; but you know enough for me. Come in. You will bunk with me. Maybe you can bandage my arm, you know so damn much."

"I can bandage your arm. I have bandages and salves with me, which I brought, thinking that I might possibly meet with an accident."

"I think I've struck an angel, Cummings. You can get out now. You must be on the road by three o'clock, for the rear. I want to find out if all the logs are out of the Salmon stream pond. I have been worrying about

the logs jamming ten miles above the river. There is a sharp turn there, and we had the devil's own time there last year. Now go. I say, Cummings. If those Dorsey brothers don't behave you disembowel them and I'll pay for it. It will be a small bill. Now come in here, Cupid."

"My name is Gould."

"That's a good name; better than Cupid. Well, Gould, how did you happen to get down here in the woods? It's a big change from a dancing master to a river driver."

"Mr. Lumbert, let us understand each other. I am here to talk about your business, your work, and to attend to it, and not to talk about my business or my affairs. If you are ready and willing you can instruct me in the work I am to do."

The rough log driver looked into the steady eyes of the man before him. He had sense enough in his hard head to realize that the stranger was no trifler; neither could he be treated as Lumbert was in the habit of treating other men.

"See here, Gould, I am a rough man, but you impress me. I have been looking for somebody like you, if you can do all you say you can. That fiddle rather upset me. No one but a Frenchman can fiddle and do anything else. I have got a little French 'cookee' down here who can almost make me dance, as big and old as I am. I like the little cuss, but to keep the upper hand you have to make every man on the drive think you are just thirsting for his blood.

"My, my, but my old arm does ache! Can't you help a poor devil?"

"Yes, I think I can take the pain out of it, if I can get a little hot water."

"Just step outside of the tent and yell 'Frenchy,' and he'll come. He is right on his taps as a rule."

Gould stepped to the door and in full rich tones shouted, "Henri!" giving the boy's name as the French pronounce it—"Ong-re." In a surprisingly short time the boy appeared with his face radiant as he said, "You spik French?"

"Very little, Henri. Can you bring me some hot water at once?"

"Oui, oui." And without another word the boy sped away. He was soon back with a pail of hot water and a small tin dipper.

"I tinks old boss has no deeper."

"You are thoughtful, Henri."

"You wants more queek?"

"No. This will do for to-night." He entered the tent, walked up to Lambert, took the great hand, and without a word proceeded to unbandage it. When exposed the arm showed that it had been much bruised. It was black and blue in many places, but the skin was not broken.

"Can you stand a little pain for a few minutes, Mr. Lambert?"

"Damn it, yes; for you have got a touch like a woman."

Gould laid the bruised arm upon the edge of the rough cot and began to bathe it in the hot water, gently but firmly, and then to massage it. At first Lambert winced, but gradually his head sank back upon the rough pil-

low and he closed his eyes, and before Gould had finished bandaging the arm Lumbert was sound asleep.

Gould was awakened next morning by hearing Lumbert call out, "Well, young man, if you are going with me you had better get a wiggle on yer."

For a moment Gould was at a loss to place himself. Where was he? His rest had been perfect and his sleep so profound that it was difficult for him to throw it off. He sprang up to see a big figure standing in the fire light in the front of the tent.

"You go down to the river and splash the Penobscot in yer face, and it will take the bats out of your belfry."

For the first time in his life Gould had slept through the night without disrobing. He began to feel uncomfortable.

"I think I will take a dip."

"You will find one right behind the box," said Lumbert, mistaking Gould's meaning.

"Oh, I mean a swim," laughingly replied Gould.

"Well, be quick about it, and don't let the logs take you down to Mattawamkeag."

"I will look after that."

Gould was refreshed by his bath. There was a stimulation in that rolling, fresh water that he had not experienced in any other. It seemed like the primal fluid of nature, charging him with a new energy. The morning was beautiful. The sun had not yet risen, but daylight had come, the air seemed "like a drink-diet," and as Pope has said, "contents our natural desires." This occurred to our hero as he stood on the banks of the flowing river on that early August morning. He realized that he was moving into the unknown. He had no plan, scarcely cared what happened as long as he could do something; be of service to someone; redeem himself in the estimation of himself.

While dressing he heard Lambert call:

"Gould, beans are waiting for yer. Ye better take 'em while they're hot and the grease runs."

"I'll be with you in a moment."

"I say, young man," began Lambert, "would yer mind rubbing my old arm a little again this morning? That woman's touch of yours takes the pain out, and I slept like a log. Did I snore?"

"I couldn't say, Mr. Lambert. Everything was a blank to me."

Lambert rolled up his sleeve, and Gould began his gentle massage.

"I think that'll do, young man. I shall have to allow you about ten dollars a month extra for doctoring me."

As Lambert was buttoning his sleeve he said. "See here, young man, I suppose when you get good and ready you will tell me who you are, but I shan't ask you—I am going to trust you just on your looks. If you can back them up you are a damn good fellow. But many a poor fool has been sold by good looks. May be I shall be too."

"I think not," said Gould, "but it might be well enough for you to 'watch out' until you know me better."

Gould had conceived a decided liking for

the rough old man. He saw that under his rude manners there was a warm, kindly feeling; a heart that mistrusted itself and outwardly affected a sternness in order to disguise its real gentleness, which would be construed as a weakness among the rough element with which it had to deal.

"Breakfast is ready. We'll eat ours in the cook's tent. You want to eat a big breakfast; you may not get another thing to-day. We've got a lively time ahead of us. Jim Gramme has just come down from Grand Falls, sent by Cummings, and he says the logs are hung above the Falls in bad shape. Piles high as a mountain. Something has got to be done to break that jam, or it'll break me. We'll take the big canoe, and you, Jim and I will go up there, and we'll bust something. You'll work in some way. Here, you take this book and pencil, and keep 'counts. They give me more trouble than a crew of men."

"Where's Frenchy, Eastman?"

"He's gone to carry breakfast to the men on the head."

"Bring us something quick. Yell out for Gramme to come up. He's down getting the canoe ready. Tell Mac to wait there for us."

The two men sat down at the rough table, and were soon joined by Gramme.

Both Gould and Gramme were surprised when they saw each other. They had not met since the unfortunate event at John Crosby's. Lambert had sent an urgent request to Gramme to join him on the drive, agreeing to pay him more than he could get haying. Gramme seemed confused, but Gould offered his hand, saying, "I am very glad to meet you again. It gives me an opportunity to thank you for an unusual service. I hope the time may come when I can prove my gratitude in a more substantial manner."

The boyish face of Gramme flushed. He had seen the surprised look in the countenance of Lambert, but he managed to say, "I don't think anyone knows about it. I haven't said anything."

"I should like to know what this is all about," broke in Lambert. "Where did you two

meet? What's this about gratitude, sincerity, etc.? You are the most mysterious cuss, Gould, I ever knew," he said half querulously. "You are a regular two-legged conundrum. But we must get out of here. Is everything ready, Gramme?"

"Yes, and Mac is waiting on shore to see you."

When they reached the canoe, Lambert said, "Mac, this is my new infant, born last night as far as I know anything about him. His name is Gould. Wants a little river driving. What do yer think about him?"

A note of pride could be detected in Lambert's voice as he introduced the athletic stranger. McCausland, who was boss "on the head," put out his hand, saying, "You've got everything in your favor. You are young, strong, and long-legged. They all count on the drive. Don't let the old drivers fool you, though."

"Shove her off, Gramme," said Lambert. "You use the stern paddle, Gould. Keep the head moving, Mac. We're going ter break

that jam if we have to get an earthquake to help us. Let her go, boys," and in a moment they were moving up stream. Lambert sat in open-eyed astonishment as he watched how skillfully and quietly Gould's paddle dipped, dipped, dipped, with rhythmic and powerful regularity, and in perfect accord with the stroke of the man in the bow.

" You'll do, young man. You say they larn those things in colleges? I used to think they used books there, when I was a young man, but I understand they've dropped them all, and just use boxing gloves, bat sticks, padded breeches, long hair, oars, and it seems they've added paddles. Well, if they're going to be river drivers it's the best thing they can do. You must have got your lesson pretty good, for you paddle better than an Injun. But the logs are coming thick. Here, you take the pole, Jim. Keep the logs away. The infant will keep the canoe moving." Gramme threw down the paddle and seizing the pole, began to push the on-coming logs aside, Gould urging the canoe along with perfect ease.

CHAPTER VII

HOW grand it was to be here! He had heard that in this exciting and dangerous service men lost all sight of wages or reward, their supreme purpose being that the drive go down to the Argyle boom. This was their reward, for they were the visitors that had triumphantly contended with the wild rivers *ferré de rochers* (shod with rocks).

This was life. There was something of the heroic about it. He was doing something. At last he was geared into the machinery that was moving the world. He was a live wire.

The great forests rolled back on either shore; the tall trees seemed to nod their approval of him. The on-rushing logs, the bright, gliding river, the pure morning air that one could almost drink from out those forest aisles, the sun just rising over the tree tops like a god smiling on a contented universe. Every-

thing stirred him to effort. He felt a new joy pulsating through every fiber of his being. This was life, abundant and o'erflowing. No wonder that in the midst of such scenes men lost sight of mere pecuniary reward.

For an hour the canoe moved on. Finally Gramme threw down the pole, and said, "Give me the paddle again. Mr. Gould's guiding of the canoe makes the pole unnecessary. I never saw such work with a paddle before."

"I guess, Jim, you and I was thinking along the same line. I am going to feel of this infant's muscles when I get a chance. Ain't yer tired, Gould?"

"Just a little, but I can paddle to the Falls; we are very near them, I take it, judging by the roar we hear."

"Yes, I can see the men, working on the lip of the Falls. Why the logs are shingled right over! How did that happen, Jim?"

"I can't exactly tell. Cummings will explain. There is quite a little channel opened over the Falls, and if they can keep it open we can pick off logs pretty fast. I think we had

better run up into the Millinocket with the canoe."

"For sure," replied Lambert. "By G—d, ain't they piled up! Run up into that little river. We'll leave the canoe there, and climb to the Falls."

Gould now could hear the roar of the waters and see the foam floating around like white islands in the eddy near the mouth of the Millinocket. What a power there was in that wild, tumbling cataract! A power more than wasted, for it was now an impediment and dangerous. Why had it not been harnessed as the Falls of Niagara had been, and made to send a measureless and thrilling power along the wires of distribution? This thought had possessed him to the exclusion of every other idea. He was recalled by a shout from Lambert, who, in a surprised and somewhat imperative tone, called out:

"What are you doing, man? Don't you see you are running straight for the wing logs?"

The blood rushed into Gould's face. In an instant he sunk the paddle deep into the

water, under the sharp stern of the canoe, and, with a deft stroke, swung the craft skillfully along the outlying logs and brought it to a standstill.

"Well done," said Lumbert as he stepped out of the little vessel. "I thought you didn't know what you was about, you had such a far-away look in yer face, but I'll take it all back. You was just trying to show us what you could do."

To Lumbert's surprise, Gould answered, "No, sir. I was indeed thinking of something else, and if it had not been for you I should have wrecked the canoe. I deserve no credit."

Lumbert looked at Gould in astonishment. "Well, by the Great Horn Spoon! I can't understand you. Did ye hear that, Jim? Jest when I was laying it on thick he kicks it all over and says he was to blame and that I saved the boat. Well, I swear! When a man is really honest, and insists on telling the truth, he still astonishes the world. I say, Gould, you'll be dreadful lonesome up among the boys. Won't he, Jim?"

But Jim was busy pulling the canoe over the logs and on to the bank, Gould helping him.

"Mr. Lambert," said Gould, as the three men started towards the Falls, "has it ever occurred to you that there is a grand power running to waste?"

"Certainly. We've talked about it for forty years, and it oughter be did. Here is power enough to light the whole Penobscot valley, but the P. L. A. controls everything up here and wouldn't let us use the water. But it'll come some day."

"How did this jam happen, Gramme?" said Lambert. "You ought to know."

"Well, 'bout this way, as near as I can learn: You know the little island where the river broadens just before you reach the big bend?"

"Yes. Now you listen, Gould, and you may learn something."

"Well," continued Gramme, "the logs began to shingle on the northwest side of the island. They were not running fast enough to pile up, but kept shingling and winging

out until they caught every log running. Cummings saw that they would swing into the south when the pressure got strong enough; so he sent a lot of men down to the bend to turn the logs and send them over the Falls without their lodging on the right bank. But, gee whiz! when they swung around and got into the swift water you might as well have tried to stop a comet. They came down side-ways, length-ways, cross-ways, some underneath, some on top, and sometimes three logs deep; and they crowded and crashed against the south shore, so that the water flew all around, fairly blinding the men, and there was such a roaring, crashing and smashing, that we had to get out to save our lives, leaving the hand-spikes and poles where they were. Cummings tore around like a wild man, and when the men came back there wasn't half of them had any tools to do with. The handles of the peavies were broken, a good many of the dogs were torn away from the sleeves, the poles were broken off, and in some cases the points. Well, there we were, and it was plain to see that as soon as those logs

winged out again into the current they would start towards the Falls. About eight o'clock they hauled out again, and from the bend to the Falls it was the wildest sight I ever saw on this river. They caught on something on the right shore, and there they are, piled thirty feet high, and only that little channel left between the two shores to run out the logs. If we can't keep that open we shan't see the Argyle boom this year."

"We'll keep it open, if we have to dynamite the whole Falls! How many men are there here?"

"There's Cummings on the other side; he'll tell you."

"How many men have you got, Cummings?" shouted Lambert.

"Twenty-five," came the reply. "But we haven't got poles or peavies for half that number."

"Where's your blacksmith?" Lambert shouted back.

"Went home last night, sick; said he'd send another man."

"Well that's a hell of a fix! Where's the forge?"

"It's on this side of the river. Everything's here: extra poles, sleeves, dogs, peavy handles and charcoal, but no blacksmith. What can be done?"

"Wait a moment," thundered Lambert. "Look a-here, young man," said the boss, turning to Gould. "Did I understand you to say that you could blacksmith?"

"You did.

"Can you use a forge?"

"I can."

"Thank God for something! It's worth two hundred dollars to me to keep that throat open until we can pick off the logs, and I'll give it to you if you'll repair these tools and fix up the new ones, so that I can keep those logs moving."

"I say, Cummings, you have every galoot that has got a broken peavy or pole carry them to the forge, and start up a fire. We've got a blacksmith here, and God Almighty must have sent him. Keep every man at work who has a

peavy or pole, and let the rest stand ready for new ones."

"All right."

Gramme had rushed ahead, and when Lambert and Gould reached the forge the fire had been started.

Gould saw at a glance that every necessary tool was at hand. He put on his apron and went to work with a will. And how he worked! He seemed like an inspired man, and Gramme stood at his side seconding him in every movement. Lambert had watched with growing wonder the work of this remarkable man. Who was he? Would he ever reveal himself, this handsome, soft-handed, silent man, that had so unaccountably come into his life, and had taken the name of the great New York king of finance?

One by one the men had been equipped in a marvelously short time; the tools had been repaired or new ones put together and most of the men had gone to their work, and were making swift progress in picking off the logs and pushing them into the stream. The rush

was over, but Gould was still working when Lambert advanced to the forge, his voice choked with feeling, and said, "Look here, youngster, do you know what you've done?"

"Why, yes; I've been blacksmithing, and have really enjoyed it. It did me good."

"Blacksmithing!" said Lambert disgustedly: "You've saved me and the whole West Branch drive. And ye ain't swore once, nor got out of temper. That's the unaccountablest thing to me. Three of the best men I ever knew, Jim Gramme, Albert Crosby and you, yerself, don't swear. How d'ye do it? It just seems to bubble right out of us river drivers. I believe I'm a blame fool! But I want to tell yer it looks as though we're all right if we don't have an accident. I want ye to stay with me till we get done. Will ye promise? The two hundred dollars is extra for yer wages, ye know!"

"I'll stay with you, Mr. Lambert, to the end. I think I am really enjoying myself; but you are setting too high a value on my services."

"Not a damn bit of it—I mean, not a bit of it. How do you shut off your flood gate, when you want to swear? You must want to once in a while! Don't you think it makes men hyper round when they are sojering on yer?"

"It never occurred to me that the word of such a man as I take you to be needed the endorsement of an oath; but it may be that in this country it is more or less customary."

For a moment Lambert stood perfectly still; then he turned away, saying, "Come to me when you are through here. If you remain here to-night, you bunk in my tent." As he moved out, he was heard to mutter to himself: "It never occurred to me that the word of such a man as I take you to be needed the endorsement of an oath." The seed had taken root.

Gould had finished his work, and Cummings, who had met him the day before, called down to him saying, "If you have never seen a jam picked it will interest you to watch us. Come round on this side. It's going to be pretty lively work keeping the channel open

from here to the Falls. If the logs should catch above and haul off again, it would plug up everything, and I'm afraid ruin the old man. Come round on this side. You mustn't be surprised if you hear me holler to take a head off. We do it to keep the men at a high pitch of nervous work. See 'em climb the logs! It's a big fight for us. Be careful. Don't try to come out."

"Let me go with you," cried Gould, catching the excitement of the hour. "I must be in that struggle! It will beat any football game the world ever saw!"

Cummings was off before Gould had finished speaking, but he moved on to the lower side, where he met the "old man," as the boys affectionately called him.

"Where ye going, Gould?"

"I am going to have a hand in this fight. I can't stand here. Give me a peavy, or something—my blood is up! I can pry off the logs near the shore."

"Well, be careful and not get hurt, and don't fall into the water. Take no chances,

for ye know you are worth any four men I've got.

"But hear Cummings roar, Gould. You'll see a lively time now. Listen!"

And from the top of the huge pile of logs Cummings roared out his orders:

"Keep him there, *Neddo!* Quick, *Frenchy*, swing him round! Run out to the point! *Tip her up!* Now let her roll! There she goes! *Good!* Come up here, *Injin!* What's the matter with yer feet? they're slow! Pry out that big hemlock! Throw in yer peavy, *Pratt!* There she comes. *Jump over, Irish!* Let her roll. *Look out, all of you!* Look out *all of you!* *They're coming!* Don't try to run, but jump them! *Climb! Climb! Climb!* Keep on top, or they'll pulverize ye! Look out for that crooked cedar, *Dorsey!* There she goes! All come here! Lift out that spruce, it holds half a dozen others! Throw in your dogs! Now, *lift, ye devils, lift!* Now, let her go! The whole top is moving! Run to the end, *Frenchy. Injin,* you keep here! *Run, ye weasel,* or they'll

take ye down! *Hurry! Hurry!* They will be lost. Give me your hand, *Frenchy!* There ye are, all safe! Where's Dorsey?"

"That crooked cedar knocked him down," replied Gramme.

"Poor devil! His shoes are too large for his body! Go below, men, and pull out that long hemlock! She is holding back ten or twelve others. When she starts, don't run to the water. The current is too swift. Run to the ends, or climb. *All ready!* Keep on top, you mosquitoes! *Look out now!* She's coming! Hurry up, Fornier! *Run! Run!* That's good! Keep on top! *Jump, Injin!* You're doing well! Good! You're safe! Hold a minute!"

Cummings ran down the logs and looked into the huge pile of jack-straws that he might judge where to continue picking. Gramme called to him, saying, "Here comes Gould with a peavy."

"Stop him! Stop the fool," said Cummings, "or he'll be greasing the water in five minutes!"

"Five of you come here. Here's an old sockdolager of a hemlock that is binding the whole pile. If we can move him, he will release a hundred logs. Now, set your peavies in! *Lift! Lift! Lift, ye devils!* Stop gruntin', and *lift!* *Lift* there, *Injin!* You're *playin' lift!*"

"Got to have another man," said Gramme, his face pale with exertion.

At that moment Gould's tall figure appeared upon the brow of the mountain of logs. Without a word he sprang to where the men stood around the big log and flung his peavy, sinking the dog deep in its side, and, placing his shoulder under the handle, in concert with the other straining men he lifted with all his strength. The log began to move and was soon rolled out; at the same time the whole top began to take on life and to move down towards the rushing stream.

"For God's sake, man, how came you here?" said Cummings, rushing towards Gould. "Here, take my hand! Jump for your life! Keep on top of the logs! Don't go with them!"

Jump! Jump! There! There! You're safe! Now, you go down below, and stay there. I haven't been so frightened in five years! *Go!* I'm boss here!"

"Mr. Cummings," said Gould, with cool determination, "I'm no better than any other man under your charge. I propose to remain and do what I can. I'll take your orders to work, but not to stand still."

"Well, keep near me, then," he said, "and do as I tell you.

"Frenchy, run to the end of that long spruce and tip it up! *There* she rises! *Jump* and let her go! There'll be trouble here when we get these two binding logs out. Now, dig out of the bottom, all o' ye! *Fly!* *Fly!* You seven nations! *Work!* Pry 'em out! Pry 'em out! Shove out their noses! *Why!* *yer slow!* Yer slow! Yer stock still! Yer dead! We'll have a funeral!"

All this time the men were working almost beyond human endurance. They were strung up to the highest pitch of excitement, and how they kept their feet and did their work, with

the rushing river in front, ready and eager to take their lives if they for a moment lost their footing and fell into the remorseless water, was a wonder. The logs under them seemed alive, and every little while a score or more would come thundering down the declivity, and they must avoid them or be crushed to death. Suddenly there was a pause among the men.

"What's the matter down there, Gramme?"

"About halfway up there are two heavy pulp sticks standing right up and down; they are all banked in by the logs, and the small one has got to be cut! Who's got an ax?"

"I say, men," cried Cummings, "you go up towards the bend and pry out while we cut this log. Don't let the men go far. Are you going to cut it, Gramme? It's a mighty risky job! You've got to run before it breaks, or you'll never run again. As soon as it begins to crack, you light out for yer life!"

Gramme was almost a giant in proportions, but had a boyish face. It was a good face, and one to be trusted in any emergency. The

crew appreciated the danger attending the cutting of the upright log. Should it break suddenly, no man could escape before the logs would roll upon him, and crush him to death. To cut it in the right place, and just enough to have it break slowly, was what Gramme must do or lose his life. There was no fear on his face as he advanced ax in hand under those menacing logs.

Lambert had come part way up the north side, and a little in front of him stood Gould. There was a look of terrible anxiety on the faces of both men, as the unconscious hero with unfaltering step advanced to his perilous work. The men below ceased working and held their breath when they saw Gramme swing the ax and sink its blade deep into the upright spruce. He was seen to try to withdraw the ax, but the terrible pinch held the blade as in a vise. There was a crack! The top of the log began to bend, and the main logs to settle and move. The men were watching the logs with breathless interest.

“Run back, Gramme! Run for your life!”

cried Lambert. "The stick is bending. *For God's sake, run!*"

Gramme turned and ran along the logs to the north side. He could hear the creaking and cracking of the fibers of the spruce. The logs had not started, but had moved and settled a little. In another moment he would be safe! But, unfortunately, he stepped upon the loosened bark of a young spruce, which slipped off, and he stumbled and fell head foremost down among the logs and out of sight.

A groan went up from every watching man, but before anyone else could move Gould had leaped across the logs and down the labyrinth of timber. He found Gramme with his head crowded between two logs, and blood running from a cut just above his ear. He called anxiously, but there was no reply. It took a strong man to raise Gramme's inert body from its position, but by the time he had lifted the head and shoulders there were more than a score of faces looking down upon them, and nearly half a hundred strong hands eager to help.

The unconscious man was borne to the cook's tent as gently as the chaotic condition of the rough way would permit. He was soon restored to consciousness, and it was found that his injuries were not serious.

Old Joe Fornier, the father of Henri, was left to care for him, while the crew returned to their work. The spruce still hung, though it was evident that the strain might break it at any moment. The ax could be seen, buried in the wood, but it was sure death for any man to go and attempt to finish the work begun by Gramme. For the first time men began to realize that had the spruce broken while Gould was lifting out his friend both men would have been crushed to death.

What could be done? It was evident that a big haul from above would choke the channel up, providing that the piles should roll down at the same time. It was known that there was a large rock midway the Falls that came up perilously near the surface. If they caught on this rock, the rear of the West Branch drive would not go below that year.

Night was coming on. All the logs that it was safe to pry away from the river front had been pushed into the stream. The great crown must somehow be started and rolled down. But would it choke the channel? was a question asked by Cummings of Lumbert.

"It may," replied Lumbert, "but we've got to take that chance, and try to shake them out before the haul above comes down on us. The logs are fast winging out in the bend; but what can we do? Can't you suggest something, Cummings? I won't go out there and cut that post myself, and I won't send a man. It's sure death."

"May I make a suggestion?" said Gould.

"Make it quick."

"You notice the spruce is holding all it can. A little thing would break it."

"Yes, that's the trouble. The damn thing holds! But what's yer idea?"

"It is this. The fibers are drawn very tight on the bent side of that spruce. If we can send a rifle ball and cut the outer fiber——"

Before Gould could finish Lumbert cried:

"Great God, Cummings! What were you and I thinking of? That'll do it! Gould, you are a brick, a regular corker. I'd hug you if you were a woman." Then swinging around, he called to little Pratt:

"Bring up your 45-90. I've been wondering what you've been carrying that fool of a gun around fer, now I know! Hurry up, you weasel! He isn't much bigger than his gun, but he's a dead shot. *Get down, all hands!* There's going to be an earthquake when the logs start!"

Pratt came up and took his position.

"This is the first time I ever did log driving with a gun," said Lambert. "See here, Pratt, this is this infant's idea. This is what he wants you to do." As he explained, the face of Pratt lighted up, and the dark eyes grew brilliant.

"Ken ye hit it?" said Lambert.

A quiet smile stole over the face of the old hunter and river driver, as he said, "Ye jus' step down there, and watch me!"

The crew below watched the little man raise the big gun. There was a sharp report. The

retaining spruce broke short off, and the great pile of logs took on instant life. Faster and faster they moved, crashing down the declivity with a force that seemed to shake the earth. Thousands of them pitched, tumbled and rolled into the rushing current below. The crew watched the great avalanche of timber in silence. They realized that the idea of one man, he a stranger and inexperienced, had accomplished this feat. At this moment a cry from Cummings was heard:

“The logs are swinging out above, and will soon be in the current, and right down on us. This is the devil’s own luck! I’ve been afraid of it.”

There was nothing to do but watch this new and threatening phenomenon, which seemed to mean disaster and ruin to the contractor of the West Branch drive. Cummings sank upon a log. Lambert stood grim and still, watching for the terrible impact. He had some hope that the pressure might be so great as to push the head over the Falls. It was his only hope. The front logs ran out, and he every moment

looked to see them dip and fall, but those behind began to shingle on and over, one above the other, piling higher and higher. Then they stopped, and every man knew that the West Branch drive was hung up.

During these stirring scenes two canoes filled with men had come down the Millinocket, and five or six well-dressed men had watched the operation from the opposite shore. They had seen the effect of the rifle ball, heard the rolling thunder of the tumbling timber, and understood the disaster that had overtaken the contractor of the Penobscot Log Driving Association.

Two of the men had been seen to go below the Falls and return. After talking together a short time, one stepped forward and shouted:

“Is Lambert there?”

“What there is left of me,” he replied grimly.

“Have you got any dynamite?”

“I always have it. Why?”

“It looks from our side as if you might lower a man—if you’ve got one that will go—

over the logs that are shingled out beyond the Falls, and have him place three or four sticks of dynamite in the right place, and so possibly break the jam."

"The water would drown any man in five minutes," replied Lambert.

"Oh, no. We can see one place where the water is entirely shut off. But it's a mighty risky thing, for the front logs may fall at any time, even if the jam don't start. But it's got to be done, and someone must do it. There are three here who own most of these logs, and I am authorized to offer a thousand dollars to anyone who will go down under the face of the Falls, place the dynamite, and lead up the wires. If he don't survive, the money shall go to his family. You know who we are, Lambert, and you must know that according to the contract you cannot collect a cent from the association for the logs that are hung up. Now find the man."

Gould saw a look almost of despair sweep over the rugged face of Lambert.

"I can't send a man there. It's almost sure

death. But I'll go myself. I am a ruined man if the drive don't go through, and it won't matter much."

This touched Gould's heart. "Mr. Lambert, I request the privilege of trying to do this work. The logs are piled in thick at the Falls, and seem immovable, and I don't think there is much chance of their tumbling down. We'll cross over and look at the jam from the other side. If the logs do not start there will not be much danger in placing the dynamite. I had some experience in using it while at the Tech. You can help me. Don't say no. Tell them we are coming. I believe everything is on that side."

"Yes, yes! but Gould——"

"Never mind the 'buts' now. Night is almost here. In another hour or two we cannot see."

They were met on the other shore by three of the visitors—Strickland, Palmer, and Smith.

Smith said, "Where is your dynamite and outfit?"

"There in the box. We keep it locked and

away from the men, so they won't fool with it. Here's the key, Gould. You open the box."

"Who is that man?" inquired Smith, who with the others had noted Gould.

"If you will tell me, I will give you twenty-five dollars. He's a stranger; took another man's place. But he's got more brains than all of Harvard College, and muscle to back 'em up. It was his idea shooting that log down. Greatest idea I ever heard of; and he's the man that says he'll go down and place the dynamite. You want to get your check books out, for he'll do it if any man living can. Here comes that fool of a Gramme. Head all tied up. Ten minutes ago I thought he was dead. But see him come! He's a lively corpse.

"What are you here for, Jim? I was just going to send by these men for a box for ye."

"I'm not going to lay there and have you and Gould take all the chances. Every man you've got wanted to come over and go down under the Falls and place the dynamite; but Cummings held on to them so that in case the jam is broken they can shove in the logs."

"All right. You get the rope. The infant has got the dynamite and wire. Now come on."

"Are you going, Lambert?" exclaimed all three of the men at once.

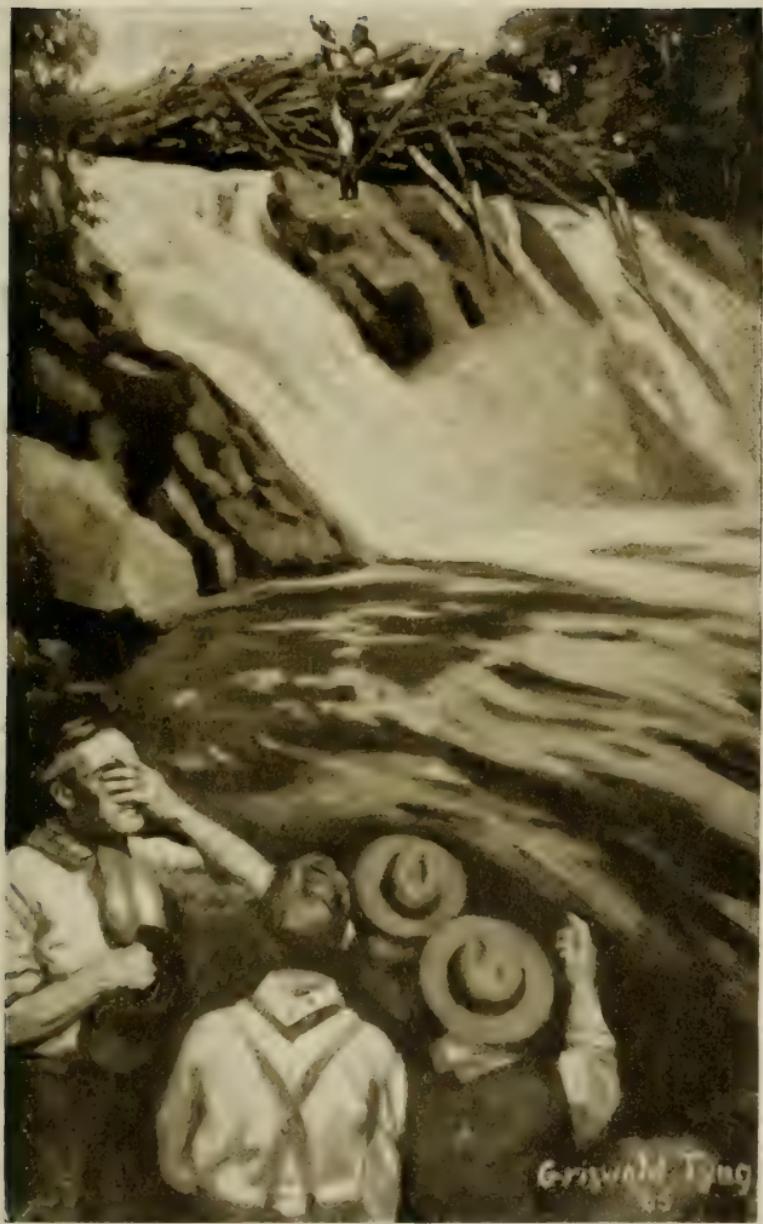
"I am going out on the logs with the men to hold the rope that lets the man down."

"And I'm going with him," said Gramme, and he started.

Gould was already halfway out. The water on the shore side had drenched him to the skin. But where he stood the water did not fly. Lambert and Gramme soon joined him, each drenched.

"Mr. Lambert," said Gould, "you stand on the shore and pay out the wire. Gramme and I will do the rest. You must not risk your life."

"Now, look here, youngster, do I look like a coward? Do you think that I can stand and see two of the best men on earth go to hell and I safe on the shore with dry feet? Not by a damn sight. I want to say that if we three men come out of this alive I'll try and never swear



"It was a moment that tried men's souls"

again, just for your sake. Shake hands, boys. It's a terrible risk, but Jo Lambert will stay with you to the end."

Gould already had the rope looped under his arms. "I think," he said, "I know better than either of you where to place this dynamite. But we must work quick. I felt the logs jar. Did you?"

"My God, yes! Gould, don't go, don't go! Never mind my loss."

But Gould had run out on the two logs that lipped the farthest out. Stepping down on one just below, he cried:

"Lower me, quick!"

From the shore another cry was heard: "Come back, come back, Lambert! The logs are moving!"

But the two pale-faced men holding the rope on which a life depended made no reply.

"Swing me in," cried a voice below.

"All right, all right. Hold the rope."

Then silence. It was a moment that tried men's souls. The roaring waters dinned in the ears of the three heroes, and the chaos of tim-

ber about them seemed to be creeping, creeping, like huge serpents eager to devour everything before them.

The cold sweat stood on Lambert's brow, and the paleness of death was on the face of Gramme.

"My God, Gramme, this is awful. Will he never come up? Don't you feel the timbers move?"

"I thought so. But maybe we imagined it."

There was a cry again from the shore: "Come, Lambert, come, while there is time! The front logs are sure to fall. Leave your men. They will do the work."

"You go right straight to hell! Maybe I'll meet you there in ten minutes," said Lambert.

Then their hearts jumped as they heard Gould call, "Pull the rope in. Now haul up." In another moment he stood with his two friends on top of the logs.

"Now follow the wire to the shore. I have three sticks wired. The shock will send off

the others. The logs are dipping at the front!"

The men rushed to the shore.

"Get out of the way!" said Lambert. "Climb the bank. We must fire before the logs fall and break the wire."

There were heard two heavy smothered reports. The overhanging logs were seen to lift up bodily and for a moment to hang in the air as the released waters shot out like a fluid shaft from under them. Then the mass dipped and fell into the raging torrent below.

Soon the entire body of timber began to move, at first slowly, gaining force and velocity from the great pressure behind, and went thundering over the Falls and down the cataract. It was a scene of wild and terrific grandeur. Gould felt as though his heart would leap from his mouth as he heard the *boom—boom—boom* of the huge timbers as they went plunging down that rock-shod, foaming channel.

He could hear the ominous roar of the wild waters, and the triumphant shouts of the men as they saw this last obstacle overcome.

Late that night the last log on the drive had passed over, and in ten days more all were safely locked within the Argyle boom, and the West Branch drive had another hero whose name had gone wherever in the old State of Maine men took their lives in their hands that they might do service for other men.

CHAPTER VIII

IN the run from the Falls to the boom there was one incident that brought out the character and capabilities of Gould in a new light.

At Passadumkeag the "old man" had hired two strangers to take the places of two of the crew who were on the sick list. The names they gave were Jim Sykes and Bill Lunt. They were rather tough-looking subjects, evidently from the city.

They were powerfully built men, and said they had had experience as river drivers; but it was soon made evident that they proposed to shirk whenever they could and avoid taking risks on the running logs.

When logs had been driven by the impact behind into the marshes and had to be carried bodily with peavies these men were always found busy doing something else. This made

the old crew grumble. It wasn't their idea of a "fair shake." Shirking is the one great offense on the drive, and these men were plainly shirking.

And then, too, a great many small articles had been missed from the kits of the river drivers. They had bought a few things at the towns along the river, such as stockings, shirts, brushes, combs, etc., and many of them had disappeared. Nothing of this kind had occurred before these men joined them, and there was a growing suspicion that the two strangers were "hard tickets" from the city slums.

Gould had been made boss of the center, and was also keeper of the time and general accountant of the drive, much to the relief of the "old man." On several occasions he had found serious errors in the extension of the supply bills, which saved Lumbert considerable money. His trust in his "infant" had grown so great that all the accounts were turned over to him, and he was consulted constantly.

"You are my balm of Gilead, young man,"

he would say to Gould. "If I was a rich man I would adopt you and make you my heir. But I am poorer than a Greenfield farm, where you can't raise an umbrella."

One day as the drive was passing Greenbush the two strangers shirked in a manner not to be endured, and, to add to the trouble, Dorsey, one of the best men on the drive, who had not seriously suffered from being knocked into the river, had found some rum somewhere and was drunk and ugly.

The logs crowded the left shore, lodged, and ran up on the banks in a most aggravating manner. In some places they had shingled and piled up considerably. Nothing would have been thought of this if they were not so near the end of the work. The men were anxious to get to the boom, and everything that retarded their progress made them nervous and excited. Shirking at this time was maddening to them.

Word had been sent to Lambert by Gramme, through little Fornier, that the men would leave the drive "in a bunch" if the two "bum

loafers" didn't do their part of the work. "You had better come up," Gramme sent word, "or we shan't pass Greenbush to-night."

"I say, Gould, I've got a new job for ye. You've done everything but fight. I begin to think you haven't any temper. I want you to go up to the left shore and straighten out matters, and make those two long-legged cantankerous cusses work, or discharge them. They say Dorsey is drunk. He's meaner than pizen when he's drunk. Gramme is too good-natured a fellow for a boss. You go up and send the logs along, and knock those skunks—well, knock some sense into 'em. I came mighty near slipping up that time."

When Gould reached the rear he found the men growling, and standing round doing nothing.

"What's the matter here?" he said to Pratt. "Why don't you work? I've come up to help you."

"The men won't do a thing with Sykes and Lunt sitting under the bushes on the shore, smoking. Dorsey is drunk. He's made the

cook mad because he's knocked little Frenchy down, and Eastman won't do a thing until Dorsey is run off. Dorsey has got to fight someone, and get a licking, before he will be good for anything."

Gould saw that all the trouble lay in the loafing of the two strangers, and Dorsey's trouble with the cook shut off the prospect of their getting meals; and a crew of hungry men is like a locomotive without fuel—it will come to a standstill.

"Come with me, Gramme," he said. "We'll settle this." There was determination in his voice, and fire in his eye. He moved towards the two men, who were leisurely smoking their pipes.

"Lunt, Sykes, put away those pipes and go to work, at once. These are the orders of Mr. Lambert, and he has told me to see that they are carried out. Either do this or consider yourselves discharged, and half your pay cut off."

The swarthy Sykes slowly took his pipe from his mouth and said sneeringly, "Maybe

we shall. Maybe you're the whole West Branch drive, and maybe you know who robbed the bank at Greensburg. Eh, Bill?" he said, nudging his companion.

Before he had time to sneer again strong hands had seized him by the throat and nape of the neck, raised him, and hurled him sprawling among the rocks and logs on the shore. He was stunned by the fall.

Lunt had jumped up, and was rushing at Gould with his fists clenched and one arm upraised. But Gould turned and met him with a blow on the point of his chin, and he fell like a stricken ox.

Sykes had partly recovered and was looking around for a stone, when Gramme jumped on him, and crowding him between the logs, held him.

Gould stepped back to where Lunt lay, and seeing that the man was conscious said to him, "Will you go to work now, or be discharged? You have loafed and shirked all you are going to. If it is fighting you are after, you can have all you want."

Lunt looked about stupidly. Finally he said, "Help me onto my feet."

Gould bent over to help the man arise when he heard Gramme call out, "Look out for Dorsey. He's coming at you with a peavy."

He turned just in time to avoid a lunge from Dorsey, who, drunk and ugly, had come around in time to see part of the fight, and, Irish like, seeing one man down thought that the top man ought to be killed.

Dorsey, missing his first victim, fell over Lunt, which maddened him all the more, and in his fury he became mixed, and swinging around jumped on Lunt and began to pound him, thinking he was Gould.

In another instant he was sprawling among the rocks and logs, flung down by the same soft strong hand that had soothed the bruised arm of Lambert.

Dorsey was helped to his feet by Gramme. He had been considerably bruised but had been sobered. He broke out as he rubbed his head:

"Phwat in the devil has happened? Did I

have an illegant fight, and who was licked? I found meself hammering a spruce log. Jim, did ye have a hand in it? Faith, I think I'm licked, but I hit some spaldeen and now I am content. Where's me peavy? I can work now."

Gould, addressing the two men, rather sternly said: "If you have got enough, go to work, and let this be the end of your loafing."

The men said nothing, but sullenly rose and, one taking a pole and another a peavy, went to rolling in the logs. They worked well until the logs were safely boomed. But there was no mistaking that they meditated revenge, and Gould was warned by all the crew to keep his eye out.

After the men went to work Gould was hailed by a voice from the shore that he recognized.

"Well, that was just beautiful. I must come down and congratulate you. You fight just as fine as you fiddle. That chin pointer you gave him was a little the slickest pinking I

ever saw. I thought I was pretty good myself, Jay, my boy, but that clip would have made John L. Sullivan green with envy."

Gould saw Link Lincoln advancing, his face lighted with a broad good-natured smile, and his ready palm extended.

While the acquaintance of Lincoln with Gould rested only upon their meeting at the Major's the evening he had played, yet he shook hands with all the cordiality of an old acquaintance.

"I say, old fellow," said Lincoln, "where can I see you for a few moments? I've got some great things to tell you."

Gould could not help thinking how some of his aristocratic acquaintances would have been shocked at what they would have termed this "beastly familiarity, don't you know?" But he was really glad to see the fellow, whose real honesty and kindness of heart were very evident. So he said:

"As soon as the logs pass that point that makes out into the river they will run themselves to the boom, Mr. Lumbert says. Come

to the wangan to dinner if you feel inclined. How are the Major and family?"

"Why it would take me two hours to tell you," replied the eager Lincoln. "You know John Crosby tried to get that violin away from Lois?"

"No, I didn't know. How about it?"

"Well, it is too long. The men are looking back. I've got a little business at Costigan. As soon as I attend to it I'll come to the wangan to dinner," and he was off.

The logs were soon shoved out of the cove, and were on their final run to the boom. All the men were in good spirits, save Lunt and Sykes. They remained wrapped in gloomy thought.

Lincoln was on hand at dinner, and being well acquainted with Lambert entertained them all with his yarns and jokes. He was a favorite with everyone, and a very successful salesman.

Lambert had been told of the fight by Frenchy, who had come running down to the "old man" greatly excited.

"Mees Lambert. Ze man wiz ze soft hand he jess fight some—so," and Frenchy struck out into the air with his right hand. "He ver' mad, mos' awful mad. He kill tree men two clip—*bing—bing!* Nevar see him lak dat 'fo'. Ze two lang-legged what you call 'em—jail—jail—jail crow?"

"Jail bird, Henri."

"Sykes, Lunt, he no wok. Gould, he say you go wok some queek. Toute suite. Oui. Ze birds zay look up lak bully, and zay spik out some vey bad ting. Mon Dieu! Ze man wiz ze soft hand he grab crow bird an' he mak him flat down mit dare log go slam. By Gar! dat was so queek, I don't see anything. Ze other jail owl he rise up ver' mad, lift han' like dat," and Frenchy's arm was in the air again. "I see heem myself, and Henri says, he gone now for sure. I feel ver' seek. By gar! dat man he jess shoot out so—and brak chin mid dat fist off. Ze man he lay right down ver' still. Zen Henri he come to tell you dat. Oui, oui."

Gramme had come down and given a succinct account of the affair to Lambert, who

roared with laughter. As soon as he could get his breath he said, "Well, I am glad to find that there's fight in that fellow. Now I know he's human. He was so darned immaculate I began to think he wasn't of this earth, earthy. A man has got to have some faults or he won't suit everybody."

As soon as the dinner was over Lincoln and Gould strolled back to the road that ran near the river and Lincoln told the story of what had occurred at Falling Water during the last two weeks. He talked very rapidly, Gould interrupting him but twice during the exciting narrative.

"Why, you see," Lincoln began, "Sapient came back after the excitement—caused by the robbery of the bank at Greensburg—had died down. There were some who said they guessed he knew more about it than he would like to tell. He and the Hon. John got mighty thick. Sapient left the hotel and went to Crosby's; had the best room in the house.

"One day. Crosby brought him to Squire Gray's store and introduced him to Lige Fes-

senden, Jake Cornish, Eph Royal the old peddler, who is supposed to have considerable money, Zeke Lansil the station agent, John Cary who keeps the public house, and a lot of other fellows who were loafing around the Squire's place.

Sapient began to tell about a wonderful oil well he had in California, in Calaveras County. He said that he and John Crosby and some others owned a controlling part in it.

“‘Why,’ he said, ‘Mr. Crosby here has bought sixty thousand shares, and, gentlemen, you are to have a millionaire in your midst before two years, right here in your neighbor, the Hon. John Crosby.’

“Old John swelled up like a toad and looked as pompous as an emperor. I was there myself and heard it all.

“‘Now,’ Sapient went on, ‘your neighbor, Mr. Crosby, in the goodness of his heart wants all his old friends to share in his prosperity.’

“‘Jess so, jess so,’ broke in old John impressively.

“‘So I’ve come up to offer you a chance to

get in on the ground floor of this great enterprise. The par value to-day is ten cents a share. Now let me tell you about the property.'

"And he went on as only a promoter can, to bewilder and fascinate his credulous listeners with visions of sudden wealth. When he had finished, he took out some papers gotten up on purpose to attract and give a bona fide look to everything he said.

"Now, gentlemen, I am ready to take your subscriptions, but please remember that the price is strictly confidential. I have sold to some of the wealthy men in New York and Boston this same stock for as much as fifty cents a share.'

"Lige, he was right on his feet. 'I've got a little money down in the savings bank. I can't jest tell how much, but I'll take it out and buy some of this stock; and neighbor Crosby, I want to thank you for giving me this chance. You are jest heaping coals of fire on my head, and I ask your pardon for what I said to you a few weeks ago, when I was Lige the First.'

“‘Well, sign for one thousand shares, Lige,’ said Crosby, ‘and it will be all right.’

“About that time the Squire came to the door of the post office and called to Lige. He drew him into the office and said:

“‘Elijah, don’t sign for any of that stock to-day. I don’t quite like the looks of things. This man says they have an office in New York. Mr. Gould comes from there, and he may know if there is such a concern. You wait until he gets back.’

“‘Why, John Crosby has bought it,’ said Lige, ‘and if I wait for that man Gould to get back, it will be all gone.’

“‘Well, Elijah, you wait. You used to believe in me and seek my advice. Hadn’t you better take it now?’

“‘Yes, Squire, I’ll wait. I never missed it when I took your advice.’

“When Lige went back to the store Sapient had the name of every man for quite a number of shares, and the money was to be paid in a few days. Well, that same day I saw the men Sykes and Hunt, that you had trouble with,

talking with Sapient on the porch of the hotel.

“The Squire did everything he could to delay the payment of the money, but for the first time some of the neighbors who thought they knew better than he had bought the stock and paid the money. Jake Cornish, John Cary, and the station agent are strutting around town thinking they are millionaires in embryo.

“Well, here’s another chapter of the story. Sapient had been at John Crosby’s but a few days when he began to inflict himself upon Lois. Now, you may not know it, but Lois is a high stepper and as proud as a French countess; in fact, she is half French and of the highest caste, a pure de Neumoir.”

“A de Neumoir,” said Gould in a surprised voice, “are you sure?”

“Perfectly,” replied Lincoln. “But let me go on. Lois bore it, for the sake of her aunt and little Joey. But one night when I was calling on Maddie,” and Lincoln’s voice grew confidential as he said, “Perhaps you know—well, the fact is, Mr. Gould, I guess I’m in

love with Maddie and I ain't ashamed to say so, for she is the dearest and sweetest girl I ever met. But never mind that. I stayed pretty late, and was about to start away, when we heard someone run along the porch, and then Lois crying 'father—father!'

"The Major sprang to the door and Lois fell in his arms in a dead faint.

"It was some time before she was restored. Finally she opened her eyes, saying, 'Am I safe?'

"'What is it, my child, what has happened?'

"'Oh, that man, that wicked man?'

"'What man?' said the Major, his face taking on the strange gray color it has when he is excited.

"I thought it was time for me to withdraw, but as near as I could gather this is what occurred:

"John Crosby and his wife and little Joey were attending some social function in Greensburg, leaving Lois in the house alone. It was understood that Sapient was to be at the function too. But he came to the house while

Lois was alone and offered her some indignity. She fled from the house, and he followed her to the bridge, but he did not dare to go further.

"The next day the Major took a green-hide, went down to his brother's, walked into the house, seized Sapient, flung him on the floor and cowhided him until he fainted, and that in the presence of old John, who knew too much to interfere."

"Grand, grand!" cried Gould, "Major Crosby is a hero, and if I ever meet that Sapient I'll not spare him. The dog!"

Lincoln was surprised at the feeling exhibited by Gould. But he continued:

"There's another thing I haven't told you. About a week before this happened, old John, with Sapient, came to the Major's house and said they would like to see the violin.

"'It is sold,' said Madeline, who happened to be alone.

"'Well, Mr. Sapient plays and would like to try it,' said Crosby.

"Madeline went into the room occupied by you and brought it out. Sapient took it out

and played a little, and said something to old John that Madeline did not understand.

"Finally her uncle said, 'I bought this violin of Lois for twenty-five dollars, over a year ago, and the price was to apply on the interest account, but as that has been paid I will leave the twenty-five dollars and take the violin home with me.'

"Maddie caught on to what her uncle meant to do before he had half finished. Seizing the violin from the hands of Sapient she fled with it through the kitchen and out to the garden, where her father was working.

"The two men did not follow her. But that night the violin was sent to the Squire's for safe keeping.

"That same night Lois came home bringing little Joey. Somehow the report got out that you had been drowned or blown up at Grand Falls. The head of the drive had found that funny hat of yours in the river, and the report went around that you were dead. I had run over to the house and was talking with Maddie when the Major came in, his face as white as

a sheet, and sank into a chair saying: ‘They say Gould has been drowned. They have found his hat in the river.’ The Major broke down and sobbed like a child.

“I was called to myself by hearing Mrs. Crosby say, ‘Lois, Lois, my child! what is the matter? Don’t look that way.’

“I turned and looked at the girl. Those beautiful eyes of hers had a fixed stare of agony and she was as white as marble. She did not seem to see anything, but fell into her mother’s arms crying, ‘Mother! mother! he’s dead—dead—dead.’

“You see, Mr. Gould, she’s one of those proud creatures that thinks everything of her friends; and she knows that you saved the place, and proved to be the best friend they ever had.

“Well, the next day the papers came out and contradicted the report, and gave a splendid account of what you did at the Falls. The story has gone all over the State and the New York and Boston papers have taken it up. The town is wild over it, and the people claim

you as their own, and when you go back there they will decorate you.

"I guess that's all this time. Do you smoke, Mr. Gould?"

"Yes, sometimes, thank you." And he took the proffered cigar.

"I'm mighty glad you've got one 'bad habit' as some people call it. When do you expect to go back home?" said the ingenuous Lincoln, as he shook hands with Gould.

"The first of the week, I think now." And they parted, one to his active business as a salesman, and the other to think over the strange story he had heard, and the meaning of those words uttered by Lois Crosby, "Mother, mother! he's dead—dead—dead!"

CHAPTER IX

JAY GOULD was on his way—where? “Home” Link Lincoln had said. But had he a home? Certainly Falling Water held for him something that made him almost eager to see it again. He called up the wan face of his friend, the Major, who gave everything and expected nothing, out of whose eyes there shone an affection and trust he had never seen in those of any other man, unless it was that behind the cold, steely gleam of Lionel Sharpe’s. He thought of the sterling qualities of the good old Squire, strong in his simple uprightness and kindly purpose of heart; of that rough diamond, Lige Fessenden, whose homely honesty and power of introspection had so interested him; of the troubled and factious John Crosby trying to stem the current of nature only to be made wretched. And then he could see the bright figure of little

Madeline moving about the house, with madrigals always on her lips; the wearied but beautiful mother, gracious and grateful, a lady by nature and birth, giving to her rude home something of elegance, a quality that made one forget that it was not a home of wealth.

And then another face, another voice—Oh, he must not think of it! Were not all women deceivers by nature? Had he not suffered from their pride and deceit? He would tear them from his heart. And yet he could hear a voice tender and sweet saying, “Are you sick, sir? Can I help you?” And “Oh, uncle, uncle! You have killed him! You have killed him!”

“This is puerility,” he thought to himself. “What would Sharpe say if he thought I was weak enough to ever give a thought to any woman? But they have proved good friends, and for the Major’s sake I should show my respect and gratitude. This is but a duty that I owe the family.”

In his pocket he had one thousand and fifty dollars, the first money he had ever earned, and it seemed to him a vast sum; although the time

had been, and but a few months ago, when he would have considered it a trifle, for however hard and unaffectionate his father had been he had been liberal in his allowance to his sons.

But how different seemed this money. It was a precious thing, and he had fairly earned it. The thousand dollars given by the Penobscot Lumber Company he had taken in two checks. One he had cashed, and one he had endorsed to James Gramme; but he had not made known his intention to anyone. He firmly refused to accept the two hundred dollars bonus from Lambert, but did accept fifty dollars for wages. There were tears in Lambert's eyes when they parted at Bangor. But it was understood that Lambert was to come to Falling Water before long and arrange for the Fall campaign.

"They'll all be after ye, young man, but don't sell yourself until you see old Jo, will ye?"

"I promise you, Mr. Lambert." And they parted.

How little society understood or appreciated

Jo Lambert. It could not think it possible that under that rough exterior were qualities that might become a prince; kindness of heart, courage, fidelity, honor, a power to do, a will to dare, to fight his way through every obstacle along the pathway of life, and when the emergency came, with an unquailing eye to look death in the face, even to defy it with an oath, rather than to flinch one moment from what he considered his duty towards a fellow man.

Gould had fitted himself out with clothing adapted to his new life. He bought a few books for the Major, a music cabinet for Mrs. Crosby, and two or three songs for Madeline. For Lois, nothing. He had thought of her, but their acquaintance had been so slight that his fine instincts told him there was not sufficient ground for an act that might smack a little of familiarity.

These presents had gone ahead, with nothing to identify the giver. In the cabinet he had placed several violin and piano duets that he had found in the music store where he had bought the cabinet. It occurred to him that

Mrs. Crosby—whom he had discovered to be a musician—might enjoy playing them.

He left the train at Five Islands, preferring to reach Falling Water without the people knowing it. He remembered what Lincoln had said about the town being wild over what had been in the papers about him, and he feared a demonstration.

He crossed the bridge and saw on the right the blacksmith shop of Lige Fessenden, from which he heard loud voices issuing.

“I tell you, Lige,”—it was the voice of John Crosby—“that, brother or no brother, I am going to have him arrested for assault and battery. He came into my house and assaulted my guest without provocation, and he’s been under the doctor’s care ever since. Daniel’s the most unnatural brother a man ever had, and I’m going to teach him a lesson.”

“Well, Sapient insulted Lois, and if it had been your child I guess you would have resented it. If it had been me I would have skinned him alive,” said Lige.

“Oh, maybe he tried to kiss her. If she’d

had sense enough to manage right she might have caught him. He'd been a good catch for a poor country girl without much of a family behind her. I rather guess he was pleased with her, and she *is* fine looking."

"Now, look here, John Crosby, I guess you'll never get the meanness out of you. Do you mean to tell me that you think that Sapient, with a face like a gallows bird, is good enough for our Lois?"

What more he would have said was interrupted by his seeing Gould come out of the bridge.

"There's the very man I want to see. He'll tell me how to straighten this axle for you."

"I don't want to be under obligation to that man."

"You've got to be if you want this fixed, for I can't do it. I say, Gould, will you come here a moment? I'm mighty glad to see you," said Lige, extending his rough hand. "The whole town is waiting for you. Whoa! Whoa there," he called out to Crosby's young horse, which was secured to the shop, and was

stepping around nervously. "Don't you think you'd better take Joey out of the wagon, Crosby? That colt of yours is prancing round considerable. If he should get away he might throw the boy out."

"I'm right here," replied Crosby. "Joey is better off in the wagon than he would be in the shop."

Gould glanced at the child, and saw the sweet pleading face, the sad plaintive eyes. The child knew him, and his face brightened up as he put out his little hands, saying, "Joey know oo. Tiss Joey aden."

There was something about the child that appealed to him. He placed his arm around the little body and felt the boy's arms around his neck. The kiss was mutual.

"Look here, you man Gould," said the rough voice of Crosby, "that boy of mine is not common property."

Lige jumped in front of him. "See here, John, if I hadn't made up my mind that the devil is using you to sarcumvent my soul I'd fling ye into the river. It's pretty hard work

not to make ‘I dare, wait upon I would.’ Sit down and be human.” John sat down, for he knew his man.

Gould had pretended to hear nothing. The child was patting his face and saying, “Oo play for Joey to-night? Cousin Lois says angels ’round when oo play. Joey tink so too. Lois leave Joey, but Joey come to see her to-night.”

“One moment, Mr. Gould,” said Lige. “Can’t that axle be straightened on the reaper without taking the machine apart?”

Gould stepped into the shop, bowed slightly to Mr. Crosby, then began to look over the machine. He looked at the beam overhead and said:

“I think so, if you can get a chain long enough to pass above the beam and down under the floor timber, so that it will be able to resist the heavy purchase we must bring to bear upon it.”

He looked around and saw the Squire, Jake Cornish, and several other men he had met, coming towards the shop. At the same time

he saw Lunt and Sykes come out of the bridge and pass along the road.

John Crosby jumped up and rushed out of the shop, crying out, "There goes one of the men that set my barn on fire. He's the very tramp."

"Well, your house may go next," said the one called Sykes. His voice plainly showed that he was drunk and desperate, for he picked up a stone and hurled it towards Crosby. It struck an old circular saw that was hanging on the side of the shop. The noise was deafening.

Joey screamed. The young horse reared, broke the hitch strap, and, before anyone could prevent, whirled around and started on the run for the bridge.

Crosby started to head him off, but the horse rushed past him, swaying to the right. The end of the shaft struck Crosby in the breast, knocking him down, and the wheels of the heavy express wagon passed over him.

The lifting of the wagon in passing over Crosby threw Joey out, and he fell between the

main stringers of the bridge and the floor into the swift-running water below.

Gould took it all in. He ran to the shore pier, flung off his coat and hat, plunged into the water and swam towards the struggling boy, who had risen to the surface the second time. He managed to get the little form on his shoulders, and felt the wet curls about his neck. The child was unconscious. He swam for the shore, the current moving him rapidly towards Sunny Point.

The alarm had spread to the town.

He saw the two girls running to the shore from the Major's house.

Gould was very warm when he jumped into the river, and now to his horror he felt a cramp in his right leg. He knew that the water was shoal a little farther below. Could he reach it? One leg he could not command, but he could still keep above the water.

Lois and Madeline were coming in the canoe. The former was in the bow. As they glided alongside the struggling man, Lois seized Joey and placed him in the canoe. One

glance at Gould's face and she saw that something was wrong, for he sank almost out of sight.

As he rose he cried, "Cramp, cramp!" but at the same moment he felt his feet touch bottom. He clung to the bow of the boat until they reached shoal water, and as soon as he could get his breath he called out:

"To the shore with the child! Quick! I'll take him. You run ahead and get a barrel."

Lois fairly flew, followed by Madeline. Gould was soon at the house with the boy in his arms. A barrel was awaiting him, Lois standing by in silent agony. She saw Gould lay the child over the barrel and begin to roll it gently to and fro, lifting him by his clothes, then letting him sink again.

Joey had not been long in the water, and soon began to show signs of life.

Gould turned the boy over, put his lips to his mouth and filled the lungs full of his own breath. Then pressing the child suddenly he was delighted to see him gasp and begin to struggle for breath.

"He's safe. We will take him into the house." They laid him on the bed, our hero rubbing his hands and face. Lois came with the blankets.

Joey soon opened his eyes and looked about in a bewildered manner.

"His clothes must be removed at once," said Gould.

"I will do it," said Lois eagerly. "Madeleine, you warm the blankets."

At this juncture a heavy step was heard coming through the living room, and a voice crying out as though choked with fear:

"Where is my Joey? Where is my little boy?"

In another moment John Crosby appeared at the door, his clothes covered with dust, while from a cut over his eye blood was streaming.

Gould was at the bed helping to disrobe the child. The frenzied father saw him.

"My God! Must I meet you everywhere? You are the curse of my life. Get out of here! Where is my boy?"

He turned to see his Joey, pale, with the

water from his hair wetting the pillows, and his livid lips moving as he faintly whispered to his father:

“Papa, papa, he saved Joey from de wiver.”

“What does he say, Lois?”

“He’s trying to tell you, Uncle John, that the man you have driven out just saved Joey from drowning.”

Crosby turned, with a strange expression on his face, to where Gould had stood, but only a pool of water marked the spot. With a groan the fierce old man sank into a chair beside the bed, burying his face in the wet pillow.

CHAPTER X

ON leaving the house after the appearance of John Crosby, Gould went directly to Squire Gray, who was express agent. He found that his new clothes had arrived. From there he went to the public house and proceeded to change his wet clothing. No sooner was it known that he was in the house than a crowd began to gather on the porch and in the office, and what he had done was the theme of their conversation.

The account of the blowing up of the log jam and the wonderful rifle shot had lost nothing in the telling. The papers had credited Falling Water with possessing a hero, and everyone in the little hamlet felt that somehow they shone by reflected light.

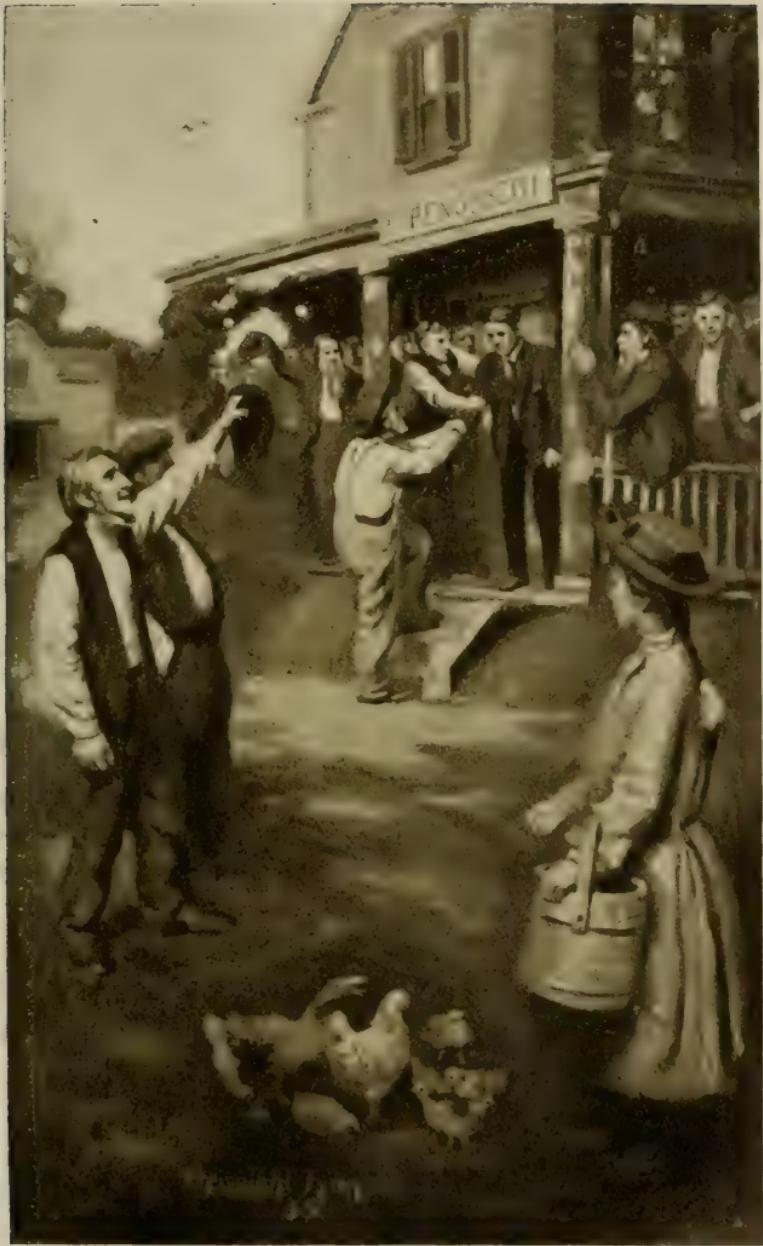
Then he added to his swelling fame by saving from drowning little Joey Crosby, the son of the man who had maligned and abused him.

All these things, occurring in rapid succession, were well calculated to bewilder the simple folk of this little town, who were reciting to one another with untiring enthusiasm the story of his first appearance, recounting over and over again, with growing pride, his exploits, which to their minds had taken on the form of heroics.

In one of the pauses of the conversation Bige Crabtree asked, in his thin squeaky voice, his eyes puckered up and drawn in lines of curious questioning: "Well, boys, he jest done all these things, that's sartin; but I reckon there isn't a man here who knows who he is, where he came from, or why he calls himself Jay Gould. Mebbe Abby Smart is right. She declares he is 'a regular princess in disuse.'"

"I don't care where he came from," roared Lige Fessenden, "but I want to tell you now 'He's a man, and take him for all in all we shall not see his like again.' That's what Shakespeare says, and that's about what we all think, eh, boys?"

"Well, you're just piping our opinion,



"He felt that the grasp of every man's hand was that of a friend"

Lige," said old Sam Gramme, the father of Jim, and the best guide in Aroostook.

When Gould came down from his room he had to shake hands with a score of men, and he felt that the grasp of every man's hand was that of a friend. It shone in their eyes as well. He was their hero, and modest as he was he could but enjoy their manifest pride in him.

The mail that day brought Gould three letters, one from Lionel Sharpe, and one from a large corporation that offered him service with them, practically on his own terms.

From Millinocket came a letter that more than astonished him. It was signed by Arthur Carter, chief engineer of a company that was building up "the city of the woods." Gould had known Carter at the Tech in Troy, but had no suspicion that he was one of the men who had come down from Millinocket to watch the breaking of the jam. "I thought," he wrote, "that you had some reason for not giving your full name. I had heard that you had left New York, and that you had had trouble. I knew you, in spite of your half-grown beard

and rough clothes. I know your capabilities, and it seemed to me that for a man of your education there is something better than river driving. I ask not how you came to this estate, the son of a many times millionaire. Something very serious must have occurred to have brought you to these woods and your humble calling. Whatever it may be, I know you too well to think that anything dishonorable on your part has brought about this change in your prospects.

“Now, my dear Jay, I am a sick man and must give up my work, my hopes, my ambitions —everything, in order to save my life, which is threatened by the enemy of my family, tuberculosis. I must find some other clime with healing in its air, that I may live a few more years, but not many at best. It has occurred to me that I can recommend you as my successor. You are in every way as capable, and have a giant’s strength, that I never possessed.

“The position pays five thousand a year, and will pay more when the affairs of the company are more fully developed. Five thou-

sand in this woodland is worth more than eight thousand in New York.

“‘But something too much of this,’ as Hamlet says. I want to see you. To prove it I am coming to Falling Water the last of the week. So don’t run away, as you prize our old-time friendship.”

Gould read the letter with both joy and sadness. He remembered Arthur Carter as a young man of much talent, of whom great things were prophesied. But even then the frail body could scarcely sustain its tenant. He graduated with high honors, and rapidly went to the front in his chosen profession of civil engineering.

The letter from the Great Northern Lumber Company closed as follows: “We have learned enough from reliable sources to satisfy us that you are the man we want for our superintendent. Please reply, and appoint such a time and place for a meeting as will best suit your convenience. We assure you that the question of salary shall be satisfactory.”

The letter from Sharpe was as follows:

"DEAR GOULD: (I think that is right)

"Your two favors at hand. Your simple affidavit that the violin is a genuine Guillaume is sufficient. I must have it. As I would pay two thousand dollars rather than not secure it—why, pay two thousand dollars for it. This is but common honesty. You say the family is deserving but proud. This is a rare blend. Generally pride and folly are twins. The wonder grows how they ever came into possession of such an instrument. Keep it there for the present. Play on it all you can. Who knows but I may come down to your woodsy home to see my new acquisition, and the one unselfish man—your Major!

"Falling Water—there is witchery in the name, and there are such wonderful violins and wonderful men there! You say nothing of women. There should be in that forest land wild and beautiful Katharines for a shrewd Petrucio to tame. They are the only women that interest me. The fierce and unlettered woman I might trust, but only as long as she remained uncivilized. The instinct of the native Indian is true to nature. He placed and kept woman where she belonged. The world would call this brutal. Well, let it.

"You don't say much about yourself, more than to declare that **you are** earning your living for the first time. That's like you. But our papers are full of the wonderful exploits of a certain 'Jay Gould,' as they have it, who taught old drivers something new, besides doing most daring things. I have a robust suspicion that

you were not looking on. It suits me to think so. Something in your letter leads me to think that you are rationally happy. This is the twin in most cases of hard, honest labor and independence. I have faith in you. One word of warning: Don't lose your heart again unless it be to some dark maiden, possibly the daughter of a Penobscot chief, who would think it honor enough to be but 'a hewer of wood and a drawer of water' in your wigwam. Yours very truly, LIONEL SHARPE.

"P. S. Our Paris correspondent writes that somewhere in Canada there is an heir to Carl de Neumoirs, who, with his wife, was lost at sea. He was a brother of the partners in the great banking firm of de Neumoirs et Cie., our correspondents in Paris. It appears that he had offended the family by marrying a beautiful English Protestant who refused to change her faith. They went to Canada, and after a while the two families became reconciled. Carl and his wife started to visit his old home in Paris leaving a child with friends. The ship in which they sailed went down, crushed by an iceberg. And now the de Neumoirs are trying to find the heir of Carl. They write us to spare no expense in trying to find this heir. Do you want the commission? It's a woman, I think. 'The pity of it.' Once more

Addios."

On his way to Fessenden's shop Gould met the Major.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Gould. I was away when you came back, or I should have been the first to meet you."

"Thank you, Mr. Crosby. How is little Joey?"

"I believe he is all right. His mother came and took him home. He asked for you several times! Poor little fellow! He misses Lois, but she could not remain there. Perhaps you have heard, Mr. Gould?"

"I have heard something about it, Mr. Crosby. It must be a painful subject to you. We will not discuss it."

"I thank you," said the Major feelingly. "We are expecting you at the house. My wife and Madeline have fixed up the room, and everything is ready for you. Don't forget to bring the violin. It is at Squire Gray's."

"I shall be pleased to come, Mr. Crosby, and will be down as soon as I explain to Mr. Fessenden how to straighten the axle on your brother's reaper."

"And after all that has happened to-day?" said the Major in surprised tones.

"Oh, your brother was not himself. He was nearly insane with grief and fear. Besides, he was hurt considerably, and did not know at the time that I was the one who saved Joey from drowning. If I wanted revenge, Mr. Crosby, for your brother's persistent misunderstanding of me, I had the opportunity to-day. Some day your brother will realize it."

"Do you know," said the Major, "that Lois has taken her mother's place at the Academy? She can teach French, but cannot teach the piano. Before you came we thought she played the violin very well, but now she will not draw a bow. We are all very happy, and we know who has made this change in our lives, and dispelled the dark clouds that hung over us. We will not embarrass you with demonstrations of our gratitude, but you must allow us to think——" Here the Major's voice choked. "Well, I'll not say more."

Gould felt the rich reward of this man's gratitude, and realized that in some way, somehow, he was happier than he had ever been before. He met the family at supper in light-

hearted spirits, and chatted with the Major and his wife.

"Will you play for us to-night, Mr. Gould?" asked Madeline, emboldened by Gould's easy manner. "We know who sent the music and the cabinet. Mother has already begun to practice on 'Stradella.' Oh, I do wish Lois would show you how well she can play. Won't you play for him, Lois?"

"It's not my violin now, dear," said Lois evasively.

"That won't make any difference, will it, Mr. Gould?"

"Not in the least," he replied. "The violin is to be kept here for the present and should be played. Miss Lois," he continued, "if you and your mother will play something I think I can judge what system of exercises will be better for you to take up. It is a pity to give up your playing now. It rather reflects on me."

"I will play for you," said Lois.

"That reminds me," said Gould. "Pardon my stupidity. I have a draft in my pocket. It is drawn in your name, and it is

in payment for the violin," and he passed the draft to Lois.

She took the crisp paper and looked at it curiously, then said: "This is a draft. I never saw one before." Suddenly looking up, "Why, this is for two thousand dollars. The violin was sold for one thousand. Look, father, there must be a mistake."

Her father took the draft. "It is for two thousand," he said. "It certainly is a mistake."

"There is no mistake, Mr. Crosby. Let me read a part of my friend's letter." And Gould read, "'I would pay two thousand dollars rather than not possess it. Therefore pay two thousand dollars. It's but common honesty to do so.'"

A silence fell upon the family. Lois was the first to realize the import of what this money meant to them. She looked first towards her mother, then her father, and in her face were evidences of gathering emotion. She arose and going to her father flung her arms around his neck crying:

"Father, dear, dear father! You can go to Florida when the cold weather comes; you and mother. You'll get well and strong. Albert can go to college, and dear little Madeline, you will not have to work so hard. I will stay at home and help you. Mother, you can rest. And we will all be so happy." And she sank down with her fair head in her mother's lap, saying: "I am so happy, so happy!"

"Why, Lois, my darling. You have forgotten yourself and remembered everyone else," said Mr. Crosby. "This money is yours; part of it, at least, must be used to give you a musical education. To learn to play the violin has been your greatest desire. Now you can do so."

The mother looked up to see that her husband was trying to control his emotion. But Madeline, the impetuous, impulsive dear little Madeline, forgot everything, and giving full rein to her feelings, she ran around to Gould, and flung her arms around his neck and kissed him, crying out in childish joy, "You dear, precious Mr. Gould! I couldn't help

it!" and she kissed him again. "There! I feel better. Why don't you kiss him, Lois? I know you want to."

Mrs. Crosby drew Madeline to her side saying, "Do you realize, my child, what you have done? You have actually made Mr. Gould blush! You must control yourself. Now, run to my room and sit down and think it over."

Madeline looked around bewildered, and ran towards her mother's room crying, "What have I done? What have I done? But I couldn't help it."

Rising, Gould said to the Major in tones of deep conviction, "I have known many wealthy men, but none of them so rich as you." And he went into his room.

That night a letter was written to Arthur Carter inviting him to come, and if possible to remain over Sunday. "I will arrange for your accommodation at the public house. I appreciate more fully than I can write, that delicate consideration which led you not to make yourself known at the Falls. Your letter came

like a ray of pure light on a darkened path. I thank you for it, and for your continued confidence in my honor. I have been both foolish and unfortunate, but have not committed myself to dishonor of any kind. I respond to your token of friendship. Come."

Another letter was sent to Lionel Sharpe, which closed with these significant words: "There are no Katherines here, but there are Imogens, who could ask, 'What is it to be false?'"

At breakfast Gould announced that he had a friend at Millinocket who would visit him the last of the week. "I have arranged with Mr. Cary for his accommodation. He has a beautiful tenor voice, and loves to sing where good music is appreciated, as it is here. I have requested him to bring some music. Some of his songs have obligatos which I will play. I should like to invite him here."

All the family expressed their delight, and it was hoped that Albert, who was away, would return and sing with them, as he had a fine bass voice.

Carter arrived in Falling Water Friday night, and the two friends talked together until the "wee sma' hours." Nothing was said by either of the cause which had led Gould to begin life anew, "away down in Maine."

Carter had perfected arrangements for Gould to take his place the middle of October. It only remained for his friend to accept.

"Why do you hesitate, Jay?"

"I'll tell you, Arthur. I promised one of the dearest old men that I ever met that I would not 'sell my services,' as he expressed it, until I had first seen him." And Jay related the circumstances.

Carter replied: "You can fix that easily enough. I know Lambert. He is a good man anywhere. You hire him instead of his hiring you. In your position you will have to hire all the men, and you can give Lambert an easier job than that of taking the responsibility of the West Branch drive."

So it was settled. But neither dreamed of the tragic event awaiting them.

CHAPTER XI

IN the morning they went to the post office. Half of the town was there, waiting for their mail, some talking about their wonderful oil well in California, some still lingering upon the agreeable topic of Gould's exploits.

"I say," said Lige. "Yer jest the man we want to see. Is there such a concern in New York as the Calaveras Oil and Gas Company? John Crosby and his friend Sapient have sold a lot of the stock here, and they wanted me to buy some, but the Squire advised me to wait until you came. He wanted 'em all to wait, but they wouldn't. I generally come out purty well when I take the Squire's advice. John Crosby and Sapient say they own a controlling interest, and it's going to make 'em dretful rich. Do you know anything about sich a concern?"

The crowd had gathered round them, and was eager to hear what Gould would say.

"I never heard of such a concern in New York, but you can send a wire to the Oil Exchange asking if there is such a concern. They know of every oil company in the world."

"I'll go and send a dispatch this moment," said Jake Cornish, and off he went.

"Where did you say this oil property is located?" inquired Carter.

"Our property," said John Cary, keeper of the public house, "is located in Calaveras County, California." He looked toward John Crosby, who had just come up, for corroboration.

"You are right, Mr. Cary," said Crosby sententiously, "and I have maps here to show just exactly where it is located. I am prepared to fill out subscription blanks and issue certificates of stock."

Carter seemed interested, and in a clear voice that all could hear said:

"It so happens, gentlemen, that I know something about the oil business in California.

I have looked up the matter carefully, for I am going there this winter with the purpose of entering into the oil production business. I have been in correspondence with the son of Judge York of Los Angeles, who is an experienced oil man, and who already has a number of paying wells, three of them gushers."

There were many knowing and satisfied glances passed between the men who had bought the oil stock when they heard Carter make this statement.

"Yes, gentlemen, there is a lot of oil in California."

Old John was swelling up. His face fairly glowed as he said:

"I rather guess you men will begin to find out that Squire Gray don't know everything, but that John Crosby knows a little something after all."

"Wait a moment, Mr. Crosby," said Carter. "There is oil in California. I have a map of the oil belt in my pocket, gotten out by the Producers' Oil Exchange in San Francisco, and certified to by the State authorities. So

there can be no question of its correctness. Step into the store and I will lay it before you."

The chart was laid upon the counter, the crowd hanging over it in breathless excitement.

"Now you can see," continued Carter, "there is some mistake in the locality of your property. Here is Calaveras County. The oil belt lies one hundred and sixty miles south of that county. No oil has been discovered north of this line. You are either swindled, or there is a bad mistake."

There was no questioning this authority. The silence that followed was almost painful.

John Crosby sank into a chair saying, with a groan, "If that is true, I am a ruined man."

"Have you paid for the stock?" inquired Harmon.

"I gave Sapient a check for eight thousand dollars this morning. He has gone to Bangor, probably to cash it. The villain!"

"Go to the telegraph office and stop payment on your check. There is time enough," said Gould. "Come at once. I will go with you. You are too shocked to write."

And that astonished crowd witnessed the strange sight of seeing John Crosby led along, weak and shaking, by the man he had so grossly outraged.

The money was saved, Sapient apprehended and locked up.

"Well," said Lige, after hearing of Sapient's arrest, "I guess Cary, Lansil and Cornish will stay at home this winter and leave Florida out of their calculations. But my, my! They were rich for about a week. They ain't so rich now by a few hundred, but they know a heap more. The Squire is the only one that saved me from making jest as big a fool of myself as they did. I have concluded that our strong hold up here is to all settle down and jest be common everyday folks. We know how to do that, and I find there is about as much average happiness in that as in anything I ever did. What do you think, Cornish?"

"There are times, Lige, when its mighty becoming to a man to keep still. And I guess this is one of the times."

Gould and Carter spent much of their time in the woods just back of Sunny Point Lodge, as Carter had dubbed the Major's home. They watched the playful deer that seemed to have no fear of them, for they would come up and eat out of their hands, and permit them to stroke their velvet necks.

"This is an Arcadia," said Carter. "Arden's forest was but the dream of a poet. This is a substantial and lovely fact. If the Major would come out and play the part of the wise Duke, and you take Orlando's character, Lois the charming Rosalind, and Madeline the friend who shares her banishment."

"Let me add a character," broke in Gould, not pleased with his friend's playful suggestion. "And you the repentant brother who 'No sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed; no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy.'"

And both men indulged in a jolly laugh, for from the beginning of Carter's acquaintance

with the Major's family it was evident that Madeline had made a great impression upon him, and Madeline seemed equally attracted.

He had said to Gould: "I never saw so beautiful a girl. And she is as dainty as rare old china. Where did she and her sister—and as for that I might say their mother—get their surprising grace and manners? To me it is unaccountable." And then more soberly he continued, "I am quite sure I should lose my heart right here if I had not forsaken love, for no man on whom there seems fastened an incurable disease should ask any woman to become his wife. I don't wonder that you find the village of Falling Water a pleasant place to abide in."

"I have found it a pleasant place," said Gould frankly. "But it is not pleasant to hear my friend say that he has an incurable disease, and that hope has fled. Many a man has been saved from the danger which threatens you by going to the mountains of Colorado. I wish you would try Colorado first, and I will give you my reasons." He did, and it was agreed

that his friend should visit Colorado Springs before going further west.

"How does it happen, Jay, that this family seems to possess everything but money? Mrs. Crosby would grace a ducal palace. What is the mystery?"

"I have heard that there is a strain of high caste French blood in her mother's veins. Someone told me so. A Mr. Lincoln, I think, who, by the way, is a great admirer of Madeline."

"Do you think she cares for him?" inquired Carter.

"Oh, I don't pretend to understand women," replied his friend.

"What is the matter with you, Jay?" Then seeing something in his friend's face, he continued, "I beg your pardon, old friend. This subject is evidently not agreeable."

Carter, regardless of his resolution to forswear love, continued to pay Madeline marked attention. They took long walks together. He sang songs to her accompaniment, and he looked unutterable things into her sweet face.

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His attentions, while delicate, were pronounced, and Madeline seemed more than pleased with her sad-eyed, scholarly lover.

Gould was astonished at the turn affairs had taken, but said nothing.

CHAPTER XII

IT was now early September, and on that northern border there is chill in the air and a hint of the coming winter. One night Gould and his friend strolled up to Squire Gray's store. He had built a fire in the fireplace, which was throwing out its cheer and bidding welcome to all the Squire's friends; so they evidently thought, for they came strolling in, one after another, until every box, nail keg, and chair was occupied, while many squatted upon the floor, content to be within the magic circle of that friendly blaze.

There was Lige Fessenden, who always occupied the front and center; Bige Crabtree, his little body resting upon a small tobacco keg; Joe Cary, who had left his own fireplace to sit around the Squire's; old Sam Gramme, Eph Newcomb, the retired peddler, and Luther Pickard and his brother Mark, two war veter-

ans who loved to tell their yarns over and over again to their comrades, who seemed never tired of hearing them.

The Squire sat on a little stool back of the counter, enjoying this mobilization of his friends. There was a look of satisfaction and content in his handsome old face, and he seemed pleased that he was living in peace with all mankind. When Gould and his friend entered every man jumped up and offered his place, but the Squire passed over the stool he was sitting on and brought out a chair for the two men.

"Glad to see ye," called out Lige. "Ye seem like one of us. This is a circle of brotherly love, Mr. Gould, and the Squire he's moderator. Rather chilly, isn't it? 'The air bites shrewdly; it's a nipping and an eager air,' as Shakespeare says." Carter looked surprised at the readiness with which this rough-looking blacksmith quoted from the great poet, but Gould knew his man, and said to his friend, "Don't you be surprised at anything you hear to-night. The further north you get,

the brighter the men are, like some of our fruit. The further north apples and grapes grow, the richer they are." He had said this in an undertone to his friend. Both felt the spirit of good cheer that prevailed, and were disposed to remain. Their presence at first seemed to check the usual flow of talk, of stories of adventures that some had experienced or had learned of; but after awhile Lige spoke up: "Eph, can't ye tell about that robber that tried to kill ye in the Seven-mile woods? Thar are a good many here who never heered of it; some of us have, but it's a mighty good yarn, and ye better tell it again, pro bono publico," and Lige looked around as much as to say, "rather think that's pretty good for a blacksmith."

Eph Newcomb, nearly eighty years of age, but still hearty and strong, was a large man, with beard and hair as white as snow. He was a patriarch in appearance. He was well-to-do, and had retired ten years ago and was living easily on his accumulations. He was thoroughly truthful, and everything he said

was to be relied upon; so when he told a story it was regarded as the Holy Writ as far as the truth was concerned. He took his old pipe out of his mouth, and, knocking the tobacco out upon the brick fireplace, hemmed and hawed a little, and then began his story.

“Wall, ye see, I peddled from here to Van Buren for nigh thirty years, and I knew most everybody in Aroostook county by their given names. I had to buy everything, from a shoe for a little baby to wedding gowns, and they trusted me with their money as they would a savings bank; and if I do say it, Eph Newcomb never had a dishonest cent in his pocket.

“Wall, some twenty years ago I started out from Patten for the mouth of the road. My peddler cart was empty. I got down as far as No. 1 when my horse was taken lame. I drove up to the old tavern thar, and told the hostler to take him out and try ter find out what the matter was.

“It was in April, and a good many men were coming out of the woods. When I went

in their big room, I found a lot of men laying on the floor on their camp blankets. It was about six o'clock, and coolish. They had a big fire roaring in the fireplace. A good many of the men were asleep. There must have been fifteen or twenty of 'em stretched out there. They were a hard-looking set, with their dirty clothes on, red shirts, blue shirts, gray shirts, and some that had not been changed in three months; and all had a winter's growth of beard. I knowed some of 'em, as they came from hereabouts, but there was one fellow that looked odd in that set of rough men. He was as slick as a hound's tooth, and dressed up to kill. His face was as white as a girl's. He had little black eyes, as sharp as needles, and one of the cruelest mouths ye ever see, that kind of a mouth yer can't see any red in the lips, sort o' thin and cold like. I'd hearn a good deal about a certain Bill Pinto, who had been around those parts and didn't seem ter have any business. Wherever he went, there was always something happened. Nothing had been traced to him, but everybody suspicioned

'im. The post office was robbed at Sherman Mills the day he was there; the store was broken into at Patten, and he was there; but that was all. Ye couldn't trace anything to him. He had been arrested at Houlton for being concerned in a highway robbery, but by the sworn oath of two Frenchmen he proved an alibi. When they found old Jim Smith murdered in his own house, suspicion pointed to Pinto, and he was arrested, but somehow the jury didn't agree, and he went scot free. I'd hearn a good deal about him, but never had seen him. But when I saw that slick cuss at No. 1, I knowed by the description I had had of 'im that it was Pinto.

"I had about five hundred dollars in my pocket and he must have known it. I noticed he kept his eye on me pretty clus and I began to grow nervous, and I made up my mind that I was going through to the mouth of the road that night, whether my old hoss was lame or not. My peddler cart had been run under a shed backwards. When it was full of goods I ginerally had three padlocks to secure the

main door behind, but when it was empty I used only one, and held down the harsps of the other two by two oak sticks that hung on the cart. That kept the harsps from rattling.

"Wall, I had the hoss hitched up and started down through the Seven-mile woods to the mouth of the road. It wa'n't very late, and I made up my mind I could reach it by nine o'clock. I heard one of the harsps rattle. When I reached the three-mile-and-a-half pitch I drove over the end of a log. Yer see, a tree had fallen acrost the road since I'd passed there, and they cut out just enough of it to let a wagon pass through; but it's being dark, I didn't see it and went too far to the right and run plumb over it. It liked to have throwed me out of the wagon. The front end bobbed up, and then the hind end, and I jest felt my hair stand on end when I heard something kind of heavy bump inside the cart, and something grunt like as a man falling over a fence and striking on his back. I knowed in a minute what it meant. It was perfectly clear to me. Pinto was in the cart, and he was

jest waitin' to murder me and git my money when he reached the Black Alder swamp, about a mile ahead. There was where he probably would git his work in. But I thought as quick as he did, I calculate. I was jest a little feard that he would think my suspicion would be aroused by his grunting, and, ter sort of de-ceive him, I begun ter swear a little about ther ternal road, and to jaw a road commissioner that would leave a thing like this. After a while, I begun to whistle, and then I tried ter sing, but I ken tell yer now boys ther wasn't much music in my voice. But I fooled him, as he afterwards said himself.

"What was I ter do? I could have got off and hid in ther woods and let the hoss go on; but that was not jest my idee of doing things. Arter a while I laid out this plan and carried it out: I quietly took off my boots, then I stepped down, the hoss still walking along, and stood side the road and let the cart pass me. I was jest a little shaky when the hind part came in sight, fer I didn't know but what the cuss had heard me and would drop the door

and spring out; but I held the heavy whip in my hand and would have made a fight if he didn't shoot me dead.

"Wall, the ground was kinder soft and sandy there where we was, and I was in my stocking feet. I run up on the right side, slipped the harsp over the staple, and shoved home the stout oak stick.

"There, damn you, Pinto," I said, "yer infer it now."

"I fell behind a little ways, but kept near 'nough to hear him if he tried to drop the door. Then I went up ter the left side and fastened that harsp. I felt pretty shore of my man then. He couldn't get out, that was shore.

"Wall, we were approaching the Black Alder swamp, where I knowed he would begin operations. I had got up into the seat and was keepin' my head down and listening purty sharply. Purty soon I could hear him strainin' at the door. He was trying to push it open. He'd got an idee in his head that the harsp had accidentally fallen over the staple, and he must push or shake it off, but must be

quiet about it. Wall, he strained and strained, and then he gave it up. Purty soon I heard him say:

“‘I say, Newcomb.’ He was right close up ter the seat.

“‘Wall,’ I said.

“‘Why, I laid down in your wagon and fell asleep, and I guess you didn’t know it. Jest let a fellow out. I want to go back to No. 1. I’ll pay you for your trouble.’

“‘Wall, I’m goin’ down to the mouth of the road, Pinto, and you can go along jest as well as not. I’ll let yer out there.’

“I heard a smothered oath, and I knew the man was desperate, and I thought he might shoot right through the seat. So I quietly slid over onto the other side, and got down on my knees in front of the dashboard, and waited.

“Finally I heard him say, ‘You’re going to let me out, Newcomb?’

“I swung my head over so that the reply would sound as though I was on the seat. ‘Yeas, when we git to Coburn’s.’

"Take that, then, damn you!" There was the smothered report of a pistol, and a sliver flew off the back of the seat. Had I been on the seat, the ball would have entered the small of my back and killed me.

"Wall, I sort of pitched forward, groaned considerable, kinder tapering off the sound as though I was dying, and then I kept still.

"Then Pinto, he begun to cry out to ther hoss, 'Whoa, whoa!' and every time he said 'Whoa,' I'd prod the hoss. He kept 'whoa-ing' it for some time, but seeing the hoss didn't stop he made up his mind he must git out. So he went kicking at the side of the cart; but the cart had been made of good sound ash stock and he was so cooped up that he couldn't lam out very strong with his feet; but he banged away for some time.

"Wall, I had got by the lake and over the rise and moving along towards the Corners. Purty soon I saw a light in a house, and I swung the hoss into the yard, and the custom in 'Roostook county is that when anyone drives in someone will come to the door. Shore

'nough, out comes Joe Moyer, and before he could speak a word—I was still in my stocking feet—I slid down from the wagon and rushed up, with my hand on my mouth, shaking my head and pointing to the cart. I whispered:

"‘I got Pinto in that cart. Git your gun and follow me. Don’t speak.’ He seemed to comprehend. I went to the head of the hoss, and, without speaking, led him along. Then Pinto began trying to stop the hoss. I saw Moyer behind with his gun, and when Pinto began to kick again, I said, ‘Stop yer kicking, er I’ll shoot inter the wagon.’

“‘I thought I’d shot you,’ said a voice inside.

“‘Ye tried to, but ye didn’t.’

“‘If yer will let me go, Newcomb, I’ll give you one hundred dollars.’

“‘Not fer five hundred, my pretty one,’ I replied. ‘When we get to the mouth of the road I’ll let yer out.’

“Moyer stood at the tail of the cart while I went in and gave the alarm.

“Wall, there was a lot of river drivers down

there, too, and they all got round the cart, and when all was ready, I said: ‘Pinto, we’re going ter let yer out now, but there are five rifles pinting right at yer, and if yer use that pistol, yer’ll die where yer are. Now, when I open this side of the door you pass that pistol out, or we won’t spare yer.’

“Wall, when the door was let down he was a sorry sight. His clothes was nearly torn off of ’im, and his slick appearance all gone. He hadn’t a friend in the crowd. They knowed his reputation, and always believed he killed a man above Houlton. After they had bound him they tormented him fer nearly an hour. After a while the constable came, and he was taken to Houlton and sent up for twenty years. I believe he’s out now, but we’ve never seen him around here. I never went over that road afterwards but I shuddered when I came to the three-mile-and-a-half pitch, for I called to mind how mighty scart I was right thar.”

There was not a word spoken while the old

man related his story. When he had finished Lige said, "We're much obleeged to ye, Mr. Newcomb, if ye have frightened us most to death. If I'd been thar I would have tuck to the woods and let the hoss go on."

One by one the old friends took their departure, Gould and Carter among the others.

"What do you think of that story, Carter?" said Gould, as they were about to separate at the hotel porch.

"Well, if I could write that as the old man told it, and have the surroundings as we saw them to-night, it would capture the attention of the world. But no pen can do justice to that story, nor any brush portray that wonderful scene. It makes fashionable life very tame."

CHAPTER XIII

CARTER and Jay lingered on the hotel porch after the close of the tale by the peddler.

"I am brushing up my French," Carter said to Gould. "Your women talk French like Parisians. By the way, old man, the more I see of Miss Lois the more beautiful she grows. Nothing but a count would do for her, and he would have to be a good count, and no adventurer. What about that French strain you mentioned? Would it offend them if we made some inquiry?"

"I think not, if we managed it right," replied his friend. "But let me show you something. I can't think that it can be this family, for the heir spoken of is in Canada. Read that," and he handed him Sharpe's letter, pointing to the postscript.

When Carter finished reading, he said, "How long have you had this letter?"

"A week or so."

"And you have never spoken of it to this family, nor made any inquiry?"

"No. Why should I? It would look like inquiring into their private affairs."

"Oh, you are stupid, my dear boy," replied Carter with feeling. "It would have shown your interest in the family. But let me tell you right here that I think this explains the mystery of this whole thing. I'll ask Miss Madeline. Let me take the letter."

"Arthur, I am willing for you to take the letter, but I request that you say nothing to the family for a few days, or until I can see Mr. Lincoln. I think he knows something about this matter, and it may save us all some embarrassment if we wait until we are sure of our ground. The family are very proud, and their feelings could be easily hurt."

"I will wait, Jay. I want to see that Lincoln, too. I am just a bit jealous of him."

"Don't worry, Arthur," said Jay with a smile. "Lincoln plays ragtime on a zither while you sing Tolstoi's 'Good-by, Summer.'

But be careful, my friend. Don't forget that there are two hearts involved."

That day there came a letter for Gould from Lionel Sharpe. It was a bulky one, and he waited until the hour for retiring before opening it. The unusual size of the letter led him to think that it was important, and something told him that it would give him pain.

He moved the stand to the head of his bed, placed the lamp on it, settled himself in a chair, opened the letter and began to read. Only once did he stop reading, and that was to say, "Poor, poor father!"

"**JAY GOULD:**—I am in receipt of yours, giving the description of the receiving of the two thousand dollars by your wonderful Crosby family, where they had expected only one thousand. I would have given another to have been invisibly present and witnessed their honest astonishment. No one living in great cities knows the joy of anything new or surprising.

"I am sending you under another cover an account of a so-called marriage of our Marshall Harmon with Miss Marion Stackpole. The crime against nature has 'come off.' I myself witnessed the sacrament of—well I'll not name it. The woman—for there was no bride—was of

course your whilom fiancée whose praises you were wont to pour with all a lover's fervor, into my skeptical ears; the one whom you thought pomp and vanity could not spoil; the one true-hearted and faithful of your set, etc., etc. How eloquent you were in her praise, and how honest! Yet she was sold to the highest bidder, and that bidder was your father. I almost regret for your sake this latest corroboration of my belief and conviction of the utter faithlessness and heartlessness of the modern woman. I resent the wrongs which you have suffered at the hands of this woman, as I resent and always shall resent the hopeless grief they have caused me.

"As hard as it will be for you to read, I will give you an account of what took place on the wedding day. Your father strode down the aisle of the church, proud and potential, to be seized with his new and beautiful property. The ghastly ceremony proceeded. The bride had the becoming sense to look her unhappiness. As she walked up the aisle after the ceremony, on the arm of the bank president who had bought her, her bearing was not that of a proud and happy bride. She had assumed to pay her father's debts and scoff at love. At the time she made the promise the payment seemed rather remote, but the hour of liquidation was at hand. I am not given much to pitying women, but I did pity her. Had she not deliberately chosen Marshall Harmon for her husband instead of his son who had foolishly trusted and loved her? The night papers were full of the usual lying

accounts of the ‘beaming happiness’ of the bride (and other—shall I say rot?); imagined and written for so much a line. Oh, I have no faith in women of modern society! They reject and scorn motherhood. Their purpose under God was to be breeders of men, but under modern society they become breeders of vulgar vanity. The reception was at the bride’s new home, your old home. What money could do to make the occasion one of garish splendor was done.

“In the midst of the festivities your father was stricken with paralysis, and now lies in a darkened chamber unconscious, unable to move hand or foot; and the doctor says the end is not far off.

“The next day your father’s bride sent for me. I met her in the long music room. She did not extend her hand, but sank upon a divan in evident woe. She knew, and has known, my opinion of her conduct. It reached her through your brother Wallace, who negotiated a large loan for her father at our bank. After waiting a moment for her to recover her self-possession, I asked her how I could serve her. She roused up and said, ‘I did not send for you, Lionel Sharpe, as a friend, but as a man; a man whom I could trust. If you never believed a woman before, believe me now in this hour of my tribulation.’ I made no response. She continued: ‘I did not know until within two hours of my marriage that Mr. Harmon had disinherited his son Jay, cut him off without a dollar save the little amount left him by his mother. I never

would have wedded his father until he had rectified this great wrong had I known it. When I think of the misery I have caused that man it makes me wretched. I never shall forget his look when I told him that I was to marry his father. But I did it to save my father. As you know, real love is something of which our society only dreams. Mr. Sharpe, can't I rectify this wrong? Can't the will be changed before—before'—then she paused—‘before Mr. Harmon dies? The doctors say he cannot live. Can't you help me?’

“I stifled the pity that I felt for this latter day Aurora. She had redeemed herself somewhat in my estimation. She acknowledged the wrong she had done you, a part of which she was innocent of. To make some reparation in some way seemed to be her determined purpose. I told her nothing could change the will excepting to break it by process of law, and that you would never do that, I felt certain. She asked for your address. I told her I did not consider that I had a right to give it, but might later.

“Now, stay where you are. Continue to live the simple life you are living. You say at the close of your letter there are Imogens there that can ask ‘what is it to be false?’ It may be so. May I live to see such a woman. Forgive me if I have wounded you. Some day I shall come to the woods. To the woods! How sweet that sounds! And yet the world thinks I am a cold, unfeeling man. Your friend,

LIONEL SHARPE.”

For some minutes after finishing the reading of the letter, Gould sat like a statue, not moving a muscle, with his eyes fixed on vacancy. He began to realize that he had almost forgotten the bitter past, and was living a new life in which there was promise and hope. In work he had found his happiness. And he had found more—found real friends that he trusted, friends that trusted him. But now another trouble had broken in upon the Elyseum of his new and simple life. What should he do? The stricken father with hot words of anger had driven him out of his home, denounced and disinherited. He had even been refused his father's name, as far as it was possible for that father to control the use of it, and out of some strange regard for that passionate wish he had abbreviated his own to Jay Gould, Gould being his mother's maiden name. He could not go back to New York and force his unwelcome presence upon the family. His father would not know him, yet his wife would, and certainly she had seared the tablets of his memory with such scornful

words that he could not respect himself should he ever seek her presence again. It had scarcely been three months since he had left New York, with no fixed purpose save that of getting away from the place where he had suffered the utmost mortification and shame. Now, he was in a fair way to make a living in a manner that suited him, namely service to the world. No word had come, asking for his presence. His love for the proud Marion had died out of his heart, and, as he thought, left it marble. He felt a warmer, kindlier feeling than ever before for the common man, and had found rare virtues existing among the simple folk of his acquaintance. And he had also found women that fulfilled, to some extent, his ideal of what a woman should be as a mother and wife. Little Madeline had appealed to him as a sweet and beautiful child of almost angelic innocence, and the cold and stately Lois had surprised him by the depth of feeling and measureless unselfishness that she exhibited so unconsciously when the money for her violin had been placed in her hands. She had

at times looked her gratitude, but had said nothing. Was she capable, this cold beauty, of deep and passionate love? He could not think of her possessing love except for those of her immediate family; but, like most men of his temperament, he was blind.

CHAPTER XIV

HE laid aside the letter, and prepared to write one to his friend Sharpe. He swung around to the table, took up the pen, and addressed the letter.

Lionel Sharpe, Monroe Square, New York City.

DEAR SIR AND FRIEND:

“How shall I begin it?” he thought. He glanced up towards the pitching mirror just above his head, and to his horror saw a form at the foot of his bed with a raised club, moving towards him.

Quick as thought he blew out the light and sprang aside as the weapon came down with a crash upon the table, breaking the lamp into a hundred pieces and causing a din that awoke every inmate of the house. Gould was under the shadow of the chimney, invisible to his foe. But the faint light coming through

the window plainly outlined the figure of the would-be murderer. Gould made up his mind to act at once. The man was standing, as though dazed. Gould sprang forward, clasped him around the body, enfolding his arms, rushed towards the chimney, with the intention of braining him, or at least rendering him *hors de combat*. In this he was successful, but he had not seen a second figure crouching near the window. His victim had fallen, nerveless, from his arms, after the contact with the chimney, and he could hear the movements of some of the family in the main house; but before they could reach him a blow from an unseen hand smote him upon the head, and he fell unconscious to the floor.

The Major had heard the tumult; so had Madeline and Lois in their chamber above. It had been their practice to leave a lighted lamp standing upon the hearth of the fireplace. Before the Major could turn it up Lois had run downstairs and said, "Father, let me take the light. You take the gun and go into the room and I'll follow. Something terrible has

happened." They could still hear some movement in the room, and then a window closed. When the door was opened they found Gould lying in a pool of his own blood between the fireplace and the bed, but alone. An old hat was found, which was afterwards identified as belonging to Jim Sykes.

With the help of Madeline and Lois the Major laid the apparently dead man upon the bed. He did not seem to breathe. Lois was first to speak, and with a voice hoarse with fear she said:

"Father, I am going for the doctor. You stay here. Don't leave mother and Madeline. I will send the Squire and Mr. Carter. I am afraid Dr. Finnegan is not at home. He was called to Greensburg to-night. But I shall find him. Don't speak, I'm going."

She flew out of the room and seizing a cloak she threw it over her shoulders with her hair streaming over it, and her unstockinged feet gleaming above her black slippers as she ran across the room and out of the house into the night.

As she expected, Dr. Finnegan was away, answering a call at Greensburg.

She went to the Squire's, and knowing that his sleeping room was on the first floor, she easily awakened him, and briefly told him what had happened.

"I am going for the doctor at Greensburg. You call up Mr. Fessenden. He was an old soldier and knows something about dressing wounds; and don't forget Mr. Carter at the hotel."

She took no notice of the protests of the Squire, but said: "Don't follow me, but go to the house as soon as possible," and off she started on her lonely three miles run, towards Greensburg.

She entered the bridge, and by the dim light at the other end saw, to her horror, the figures of two men. She stepped to one side and screening herself between the great uprights, with her heart beating fast and her breath nearly choking her, she waited developments. One of the men was saying:

"I can't carry ye another step, Bill. I jest

had time to pull ye out ther house before they was onto us. What did he do to yer?"

"I guess my damn head is broke, and I know my arm is—it hangs like a string. I can't take another step."

"Wall, I tell ye what I'll do; I'll help ye down under the bridge, and ye kin hide there until they git over the excitement. They'll sound the alarm pretty quick, and the whole town will come out, and they'll be sure to come this way. Where's the fiddle?"

"I got it here. It's worth a good cool thousand, Sapient said."

She saw the two men disappear under the bridge and waited until one of them reappeared and started towards Greensburg. What should she do? The doctor they must have, but she did not dare to follow the man. There was but one thing to do: go back, climb the embankment of the railroad, cross the bridge and follow the track. This she did, treading the trembling, narrow single board in the middle of the bridge. Had she made a false step in the darkness and in the night she

would have plunged into the rushing river below. She sped on, on, through the darkness, thinking only of the stricken man in her father's house. It began to rain before she reached Greensburg. It poured, and she was drenched to the skin. Near the outskirts of the town the railroad crosses the highway. She left it, and followed the road, over which she knew the doctor must come on his return. Suddenly she descried the figure of a man ahead of her. She sank down where she stood, but in another moment, to her joy, she heard a carriage coming towards her, and soon the bull's-eye of the dasher lantern, which the doctor always used in the night, came in sight, and in a few moments was nearly opposite where she stood.

"Doctor! Doctor!" she cried in faint tones, that she tried to make loud, "Doctor!"

"Who the devil are you?"

"Lois, Lois! Don't you know me, doctor?"

"In faith, I thought it was the ghost of me mother-in-law! Has the divil flown away with yez? Get in, and tell me all about it. By the

powers, you are as wet as a mop! I'll not breathe again till you tell me that it's not crazy you are."

The strain on Lois had been terrible. When she found herself in the carriage with the doctor, and safe, it was only by a supreme effort that she kept from fainting.

"Can't you speak? Are yez froze dumb?"

"Give me a moment, doctor. Something terrible has happened."

"Well, something terrible will happen if you don't get those wet clothes off."

"Oh, don't mind me, doctor, but hurry, I will tell you;" and as rapidly as possible, she recited what had taken place at Sunny Point. Before she was halfway through the doctor was putting "Bluestreak" over the road at a surprising gait. He stopped for a moment at his office, equipped himself with such instruments, bandages, etc., as he thought he would need, and hurried to the bed of the stricken man.

The next morning they found the heading of the letter to Lionel Sharpe, and Carter

sent a dispatch to that address so urgent that Sharpe started from New York on the first train for Falling Water.

Lois thought of the scene on the bridge, and told Carter what she had heard and seen the night before. They found Sykes just alive. He was taken to Greensburg, and before he died made a confession, implicating Sapient in the scheme to rob Gould and get possession of the violin and at the same time compass their revenge.

The violin box was empty, but the instrument was safe, though for some time the family accounted it lost.

The night following Gould showed some signs of returning consciousness; but the doctor had said that the watchers must not talk to him if he became conscious. "Let him speak first," he said. "I think he will live. The surgeon from Bangor says he's young and in splendid condition, physically, and that the trepanning operation has not exhausted him."

During the night following the assault and robbery Gould became conscious. It was

some time before he could recall what had happened, but slowly, piece by piece, he patched it out. In a rocking chair near his bed he could see by the dim light of the green-shaded lamp, the form of a woman. The light was too dim for him to see who it was. He did not realize that he moved, or had given any evidence of consciousness, but the figure suddenly arose and bent over him. He could feel the soft garments touch his face; then lower and lower sank the head above him until upon his forehead he felt the soft pressure of a woman's lips, which lingered lovingly a moment, but there was no kiss then, the lips merely lingering a moment, and then a low voice murmured: "My hero. My hero!" and he knew it was Lois. Then she sank into a chair and assumed the attitude of a watcher.

Gould's hand lay extended upon the counterpane. Soon he felt a soft hand clasp it. The touch thrilled him. It was a revelation deeper and stronger than words. It opened before him the book of a woman's heart. He was too wise not to know and fully realize

that this was love; that there had come to him without his knowing or seeking the rich gift of this girl's affection. There was a strange ecstacy in his heart. He could not understand it. Did he love her? No, he never could love a woman again. He had given one woman his love and she had scorned it. No other woman should fling it in his face again. And yet this self-deluded man fell into sleep, hypnotized into happiness by the soft touch of a woman's hand whose dumb love had spoken through "Psyche's great secretary."

When morning came Gould awoke, and the first thing he noticed was a cheerful fire blazing on the hearth. The room was homelike. He almost expected to see the figure at his bedside that had appeared there in the night; unless he had been dreaming. Was it a dream? He could not understand the pain that it gave him to think it only a dream; to think that fair lips pressed his brow and a soft hand lay on his but in a dream. No, it was too real. He had not been deceived in sleep. The touch on his brow he could still feel, and the gentle pressure

of the hand remained. She was indeed gentle and beautiful, far beyond any woman he had ever met. But her love must not be wasted on him. He would not scorn it, but by never seeing her more she would forget him.

All at once he was aware that someone was sitting near the foot of the bed. With some effort he raised his bandaged head, and there, in the great ash chair, looking calmly at him through his cold blue eyes, was Lionel Sharpe.

CHAPTER XV

AT a time just before the opening of our story, two men sat quietly talking in one of the rooms of an exclusive New York clubhouse. One was about thirty-eight years old and of distinguished appearance. His features were striking. The nose was long and thin, the eyes a cold blue, the forehead high and calm, the chin rather heavy and long and protruding rather than retreating. Outwardly the manner of the man was self-contained. There was a stillness about him that to a careful observer suggested force and power. One would not select him as a man given to philanthropy or warm friendship. He looked what he was, a man of aristocratic birth and great wealth. He was the head of a large banking institution, and was recognized as a man of unusual executive force and ability.

His name was Lionel Sharpe.

His companion was a younger man, not as distinguished in appearance, but possessed of a manly beauty that was rare even in New York. He was tall and dark, with a Byronic face and head nearly faultless in its Grecian lines. Over his expanded white brow clustered short black curls, worn in careless and natural abandon. The face bore no traces of dissipation, but there were signs of deep trouble which seemed unaccountable in one so young, gifted with so many manly attributes.

"How long have you known this?" Sharpe asked.

"Only a few days," replied the younger man. "But like Hamlet, 'my prophetic soul' has whispered that which I dared not think."

"Have you seen Miss Stackpole since the report of your father's engagement to her has been confirmed?"

"I saw her to-day," said the young man in a voice so full of pain that his companion looked at him with something of pity.

Sharpe said, "I could have told you something of this months ago."

The younger man looked inquiringly into the inscrutable face of his friend, then said, "But you did not. It might have saved me some mortification."

"I dare say," replied Sharpe, "but I came into possession of certain facts through business relations with your father and Mr. Stackpole. The latter had arranged for a certain amount of credit at our bank, your father endorsing the paper. Certain things were said which plainly indicated the relation which these two men expected to hold towards each other. But information so obtained is a confidential matter and may not be used, even to warn a friend."

"Pardon me. I honor you for your silence." He took a long breath, then turned abruptly to his friend, saying:

"Sharpe, I believe you are the only man in this city to whom I can talk as to a brother, asking advice and counsel. I have had a terrible experience to-day. I have had my follies

and my worthlessness summed up and flung in my face by the woman whom I loved.

"I had seen my father driving with her in the park many times, but thought he was paying a compliment to the woman to whom his son was supposed to be engaged; a public recognition of his future daughter-in-law. Several times I had met him coming out of her house. He would bow and smile in his distant way. But it never occurred to me that my father and I were rivals."

"Had you ever proposed to Miss Stackpole?"

"Not formally, but we had been together so much and my intentions were so evident that the public associated our names together, and the common report was that we were engaged. I felt that I was. I had told her many times that I loved her, but I had not asked if she loved me, nor had I formally proposed to her. I was waiting to be taken into the law firm of Mason & Mason before doing so. She had always been undemonstrative, but often when I was playing the violin to her accom-

paniment she would look up at me in such a way that I thought I saw her heart in her eyes."

"Jay," broke in his friend, "she did know it. What everyone else knew she must have known. She did know. But she is a woman, a modern woman; a society woman; a cold, heartless, frivolous, proud, vain thing. Don't shrink from those terms, Harmon, I am telling the truth. The modern woman of society is the most soulless thing in the universe. She is made up of insincerity, pretense and pride. She loves nothing but herself. She is barren by choice and intention. One of the Italian mothers at Five Points, with her brood of strong and active children, is more to the world than thousands of these unnatural daughters of the rich, whose existence is but a waste of substance that otherwise might go to feed and clothe the more deserving."

"You are bitter, Sharpe."

"I know that I am bitter, but I am right. You know what woman has cost me. You

know the grief that entered into my life through woman."

"I know; but still I believe there are noble women in the world yet, thousands of them. My mother redeems all of those you have nominated."

"Your mother was an exception for which I thank God. I believe there are noble women, but they are as rare as angels. But may I ask you, Jay, on the ground of old friendship, to tell me something of the result of your interview?"

"I believe the recital will do me good.

"Miss Stackpole met me in the music room. She appeared constrained and embarrassed. I advanced to take her hand, but she stepped back, and placing her hands behind her said:

"'You must not meet me in this way, Mr. Harmon, any longer. Have you not heard that I am engaged to your father?'

"I had heard of course, but hoped it was nothing but a rumor. I could not believe it was true. But when I heard it from her lips, I sank into a chair and for a moment it seemed

as though the world had faded out of sight. I must have looked as I felt, for she came quickly to my side and said:

“‘Jay! Jay! Don’t look that way! You frighten me. Are you sick? Let me get you a glass of wine.’

“She came with the wine, but I put it aside. You know how we both hate mock heroics. I did try to bear myself calmly, and to say no foolish or bitter things. But as the sense of my wrongs rushed over me, and I realized how I had been deceived, misled, how I was about to become the butt of ridicule in society, laughed at for my stupidity and blind love, and bitterest of all, the thought that my proud old father was the successful man, there arose in me such a feeling of bitterness and anger that I said to her:

“‘Miss Stackpole, I have heard such a rumor, but could not conceive that it was true. Will you tell me the price of——’

“I got no further. She sprang towards me like a tigress, her eyes blazing.

“‘The price! The price, you—nothing.

The price is a man. A strong man, a great man, a man whom the world hears of, a man who is at the head of mighty things, a man that any woman should be proud to wed. But who are you? Have you done anything in this world but dance, smile, and play the violin? Why, the very shoes upon your feet, the ring upon your finger, the diamond you wear, the clothes upon your back, the gloves in your hand, the bread which you eat, and the bed in which you sleep, were paid for by the man I shall marry. You have talked of love, like a silly boy, at times, as though you did not know that love is not for people in our caste. We have other things. This love is for the poor. It makes up to them something for the poverty they endure. I have no use for love. Your father possesses every quality that I seek in a man: wealth, name, power, and influence.

“‘Now go! May you never so insult another woman.’

“And with her head up and eyes flashing she pointed to the door.



“ The price is a man. A strong man, a great man ”

"Somehow I found my way to the hall. In the little alcove parlor, to my utter mortification and shame, sat my father, smiling as he said, with sarcasm and irony in his voice:

"'Come to my private office about nine o'clock to-morrow night.'

"I found my way out of the house. How, I don't know. I came here, met you, and have unburdened myself. Your patience surprised me. You honor me with your attention. My eyes have been opened. Miss Stackpole has read me a lesson for which I should be profoundly thankful. I see myself as others see me. I shall meet my father in no spirit of revenge. He has fairly won Miss Stackpole on her own ground. He understood it better than I. But I am through with this purposeless life. The ten thousand a year given me by my father to live on has nearly ruined me. I have an education that is practical. As you know, I always hated office life. I studied technology against the will and wish of my father, who wanted me to go into his office and learn the business. This

I did not do, but graduated at Troy, and spent two years at Stevens Institute studying mechanics. I am capable of making a living and now I am going to do it."

Sharpe had listened with great interest to the account of his friend's interview with Miss Stackpole. There were times during its recital when his impassive face took on an expression of anger, and would then lapse into its usual calm. When Jay had finished his story, and declared his intention to settle down to work, Sharpe arose and extended his hand, saying:

"Jay, what you have conceived to be your misfortune I prophesy is to be the making of you. Emerson has said, 'There is a fatal gap in human energy, that which lies between knowing and doing.' You will pardon me when I say that I never questioned your knowledge, but I have feared that you have lacked a motive to do. I have given but few men my confidence. You are among the few. You have suffered from the folly of love, but it was an honest love. I have known many

young men of wealth and education who have suffered their blood to become poisoned, their bones rotted, their life and energy wasted, because they started in life with an idea that they owned the world because they could buy many pleasures it offers. These ciphers of humanity you can meet on Broadway by the score, night or day. You have escaped this folly. Your days of dissipation were few."

"But they were too many," replied his companion, and then said: "Sharpe, I cannot understand why I have been selected by you as a friend and confidant. You are reputed to be a man of very few intimates, a proud and rather cold man, given to the highest philosophy of life, and leaving the sentiment of affection and love out of your existence. I know this is an unjust estimate of your character, for I know what your friendship means to any man fortunate enough to possess it."

Sharpe's glance wandered to the picture of a famous actress, hanging on the wall of the room, and he said, "You have forgotten that there are two of us. You have forgotten, I

hope, that terrible night at sea, on the *Oceanica*, when my poor boy brother suddenly kissed me, and said ‘Good-by, Lionel,’ and before any one could prevent him sprang over the side of the ship into the sea. You leaped after him almost as soon as he went over the side, and saved him.

“ He was my favorite brother—the brother who was left to me by my dying mother to care for and protect while I lived! Eighteen years my junior, he was more a son than a brother, and I had watched over his education, saw the budding of genius in him, and noted with pride that a great artist had been born to the world. Then came a woman, a beautiful, brazen, heartless, remorseless woman, into our quiet life. I read her as a book. She knew her power over that boy, and when I asked her to name the price for which she would consent to spare him, she laughed in my face. She said: ‘I have no price, except revenge. You made me suffer, and now I’ll make you suffer.’ She did. I tried to reason with Herbert, but he would not listen. I told him how infamous

she was, and said that I could prove it, and he replied, ‘Lionel, I shall hate you if you set a watch upon this woman whom I love. What if she is older than I, what do I care? She is beautiful and good, and she loves me. If you want to ruin my life, destroy my genius and ambition, you could not more surely do it than to slander her.’ What was I to do? I saw she had, like a serpent, wound her slimy folds around him and that he could not escape; but what persuasion and argument and love could not do an accident did. He found her in the arms of one of the most notorious roués in society, and his eyes were cruelly opened. Never shall I forget the expression of his face when he came to my room and fell upon a couch in a paroxysm of grief. I tried to soothe him. When he had recovered himself somewhat, he said, ‘Lionel, go away with me somewhere. I can’t live in the city where she is, where I may meet her.’ And so we started, and you accompanied us. We tried to cheer him up. He would sit and listen to your playing by the hour; it seemed to be his one

solace. But all the time the poor child was thinking of her. He thought he could not live without her. He would have died before my eyes had not a brave soul sprung over the ship's side to the rescue of my brother."

"My friend, don't harass your soul with a rehearsal of that terrible hour. I beg you to remain quiet," said Jay.

"I am answering your question. What an act was that! Think what it means for one to find himself in mid-ocean, burdened with the body of an unconscious man, while more than a mile away stood out in the dim light the black hulk of the ship! Imagination cannot conceive of a man making a greater sacrifice for another man than that. The boy was saved, and he lived a few years more, to be the solace of my life, until he died in my arms. And you ask me why Lionel Sharpe has for Jay Gould Harmon an unusual interest."

Sharpe continued: "I want you to leave this city. I am persuaded it will do you good to get away from all your old haunts and friends. Meet your father in the spirit of a man, and

remember that if you need a friend I want the privilege of being that friend. Come to me before leaving."

Jay Harmon's father did not wait until the next night to interview his son, but called him into the library in the morning. He sat at his desk, and laying a check-book before him, with his face averted began by saying:

"After what took place last night, Jay, there will be no need of my referring to the matter of my approaching marriage with Miss Stackpole."

"I thank you for being so considerate."

"I thought she was unnecessarily hard on you, Jay, and I told her so."

"Spare me, sir, your commiserations."

"Well, Jay, you have the least good sense of any man I ever saw. Just as I was beginning to feel a fatherly regard for your rather awkward situation, and ventured to show it, you cut me off by an unfortunate remark; the same kind of an unfortunate remark that brought the wrath of Miss Stackpole down upon your head."

"Miss Stackpole told me the truth. She showed me plainly what I am—that I am nothing; that I owe everything to you, which is true; but I do not propose to be a burden upon you any longer."

"What are you going to do?"

"I am going to work."

"What at?"

"Well, I may dig post holes. I may shovel in a gravel pit, but, having an education, which I have to thank you for, I shall try to get employment where I can use that education."

"Have you forgotten," said his father, "that there is something due to me? Do you suppose that I propose to have my son hacking around the country for work? No, sir. You will do as I want you to do or you will go out of this room disowned and disinherited, without a dollar in your pocket, save that worthless copper stock and a few thousand dollars left by your mother. Your brother, Wallace, has always done what he could to please his father. You have done everything you could to displease him."

"Possibly," replied Jay bitterly, "if I had forged your check for \$25,000, and, in a drunken frenzy, in a public place, cursed your penuriousness, you might have a higher regard for me."

The father replied, with equal bitterness, "Another of your unfortunate remarks. But let me say I did not call you in here to quarrel, but to have a plain understanding with you. For the sake of brevity we will put it upon a business ground, and upon your answer will depend whether you are any longer to hold the relation of son to me. I am not accustomed to being thwarted by anyone, much less by my son. Now, start with this understanding: I desire that you pay attention at once to Mrs. Claypool. She is a bright and attractive widow, not over forty years of age. Don't rise. Sit and listen to the end. I have paid her some attention, and have written a few foolish letters. I never had a serious idea of marrying her, but her life and vivacity attracted me. It appears that Mrs. Claypool thought that I purposed to marry her, and there

are some things in my letters that might be construed as a proposal. But after I met Miss Stackpole I lost all interest in the dashing widow."

Harmon noticed his son wince at his mention of Marion Stackpole, but he continued:

"I have tried to get possession of those letters, and have asked her to name the price she would take for them. 'Oh! It's not money I want, Mr. Harmon,' she said, 'it is the man. You are what is good.' And this really charming woman laughed in my face. I have known for a long time that she has regarded you with great favor, and has often said to me that you are the handsomest man she ever saw and that if she were a younger woman she certainly would fall in love with you.

"Now, it has occurred to me—and remember, sir, this is purely business—that you can help me out of an embarrassing situation by apparently cutting me out, as I have you, and proposing to Mrs. Claypool, and marrying her or not as you may please. You have only to make her think that you are in earnest until

such a time as I can marry Miss Stackpole, and get possesion of the letters through your good management.

"This is what I will pay you for the job: If you are successful in this matter and really marry the woman, I will buy you a home suitable for a son of Marshall Harmon, allow you \$20,000 a year, and give you a sinecure position in my railroad offices. If you secure the letters, and draw Mrs. Claypool's attention to yourself until she is willing to throw me over and I have secured Miss Stackpole as my wife, I will give you \$50,000, and some position on the road. Do you understand? I am trying to be explicit."

His son gazed at him in astonishment, and finally hoarsely whispered: "Infamous! Infamous! And *my father!*!"

"Do I understand you aright, sir? Do you refuse to do this?"

"I do. A thousand times I refuse. Do you realize what you have said to me? The infamy of the proposition! Is it possible that you think I am such a hound as to con-

sent to such a damnable act? Can it be that you are my father? Are you the man whose name is supposed to be a synonym for honor and integrity? My God, father, you can't be in earnest! Ask me to do anything within human reason and I will do it, but don't ask me to do that which only a man lost to every sense of honor would think of doing. You can't be in earnest! You are only trying me. Say so, father, that you are only trying me."

The father whirled on him, his face purple with rage, and said: "I never was more in earnest in my life. I have only asked you to do a very common and usual thing in society, and you read me a lesson in morals and ethics! You call it infamy. You ungrateful dog! You would face me down, and class me with the lowest of the low. You never were a natural son. Your love all went to your mother. You never cared to please me. You have set yourself across my will many times, but you have done it to-day for the last time. Now leave this house! Take what you please that

I have given you, as Miss Stackpole truly says, but go, and I never want to see your face again. It is hateful to me; as hateful as it was to Marion.

"Jacob," he called to his valet, "this man is no longer my son. Take his night key, and never admit him into this house.

"Now go, sir! Show him out, Jacob. As I have said, what there is in your room you can have."

Jacob looked distressed. Jay had always been his idol. He advanced to his young master, saying: "Shall I go with you to your room and help you pack, sir?"

"There is nothing there, Jacob, that is mine. All has been paid for by Mr. Harmon. Here is my latch-key. Good-by, Jacob," and pressing the old man's hand, he walked blindly out of the house.

The streets were thronged with people, but to him they were empty. The great mansions reared their proud fronts on either side, but he saw them not. To get away from this maelstrom of pride and heartlessness was his only

purpose. He thought of the woods, of the pure, quiet woods, where one lost in their solitude might rest and think, far from the maddening crowd.

Once more he called upon Sharpe, and told him the story, sparing his father wherever he could.

Sharpe said: "I think the last link is broken that bound you to inaction and purposeless life. Go out and fight.

"Has it occurred to you that you have said nothing as to your plans or purposes for the future—where you are going, etc.? It may be very necessary to reach you. Something might happen, you know." There was a significant inflection in Sharpe's voice as he spoke the concluding words, and Harmon was touched by Sharpe's insistent and unselfish interest in his welfare.

"It was my intention to burden you no longer with my stupid affairs. Your good offices I have already overtaxed. Yet I shall be comforted to know that there is one to whom I can cling. One who has some faith in me. You

encourage me to say—that while I have no plans I do have a purpose.

"I am well aware that my life so far has been a failure. The time spent in acquiring an education was well spent, all the rest lost. I have sense enough remaining to understand that contentment and happiness lie in serving, not in being served. In the future I propose to serve. *Ich dien* is a noble motto. I shall adopt it. Don't think, my friend, that I am disgusted with life. I am only impatient with myself. I am almost happy over my resolution to be of some small account yet in this wide-awake world where drones like myself are an incumbrance."

"Bravo! Bravo!" cried Sharpe. "I always felt that if the right sort of an earthquake should shake you up you would show that a rich man's son need not necessarily be a rich man's misfortune. Where are you going to begin this renaissance, so to speak?"

Harmon thought a moment and replied: "You may smile when I inform you that I am not 'going west, young man' but east: to

Maine. I want to go where everything is new and fresh. I am going to the woods, the grand, free woods, where one can throw off all the trammels of society and build himself upon his own nature until he stands an entity, a personality. I feel that I shall find work to my liking. It may be hard work—even rough—but I shall not shun it."

"Have you any money," asked his friend—"ready money?"

"Enough for the present. I am going to bend down to hard work by first taking a long tramp along the great river. Some of my friends have hunted in that country, making the little town of Falling Water their base. My mailing point for the present will be Falling Water. Don't forget, should you have occasion to write, to address me as Jay Gould."

Before the friends parted finally Lionel Sharpe said:

"I have two commissions to put into your hands. One is my old fad. If you should, by the wildest chance, discover a violin of great merit secure it for me at any price. I have

four genuine old instruments and I want more. There is no man whose judgment I would sooner trust than yours. There is another thing, and I almost blush to mention it: I am really desirous of doing some great good. I am not capable of open charity, but if you should find an opportunity where some of my money would do great good to any community, where it would help to make better citizens, better men and women, make known this opportunity to me, and, if it takes a million dollars I will not hesitate to do it."

CHAPTER XVI

AS soon as Sharpe saw that his friend recognized him, he went to the bedside and clasping Jay's hand said:

“My boy, I've come.”

Gould responded to the hand clasp, and said in a faint voice:

“It is very good of you.”

“Not at all, Jay. Don't you remember my last words to you? You must not allow any other man to take my place. I may be foolish enough to be jealous. You know I have neither father nor mother, sister nor brother. You come very near being kindred.”

The cold face of Sharpe was visibly softened as he bent over his stricken friend. Jay's heart was touched. He thought how mistaken the world was in its estimate of this man, usually so reticent, so sparing of speech. Yet here he stood with something like moisture in his

eyes, talking with the freedom of an elder brother. What would his New York friends have thought to have seen this possessor of millions standing in that log room administering words of comfort in the gentlest tones and simplest manner to a man that society had pronounced lost to its world!

"You must not talk. Let me do the talking," began Sharpe. "You'll want to know how I heard of your trouble, when I came, where I am stopping, and if I am comfortable, etc. Now for categorical answers: Your friend Carter, whom I once met, wired for me to come. He met me at the train, and with him were Squire Gray and your Major. We became acquainted at once. Dropping all ceremony, the fine old Squire told me that I was to go to his home, the public house being full. 'The spare room,' as he calls it, was placed at my disposal, and it is very comfortable. Rather old-fashioned, with its low ceiling and rag carpet, but they keep a fire burning in the fireplace, and the room, with its dimity curtains and old-fashioned windows, is

entirely to my liking. The breakfast was also satisfactory. Mrs. Porter and daughter showed me every courtesy, and more than delighted me by not appearing the least flurried by my unexpected presence. Your Squire is a wholesome man. The Major I have seen but little. Your other prodigies I shall meet by and by. The doctor says you are quite sure to recover. Don't trouble yourself about my entertainment. The Major, and a certain Jim Gramme, who figured at the Falls, are to give me a canoe trip up the river. If the water is high enough we will go as far as Grand Falls. Yes, I like it here. The situation of this log house would delight a prince. I have met Mrs. Crosby and Miss Madeline.

"I am going to the lake for a walk. These suggestive paths back of the house leading to the woods hint at mysteries that I must solve. You see, I have grown a talker; the woods are responsible. Rest quietly. Think of me as having just the entertainment I could most desire. The doctor says that in a week you will be on your feet."

He had said nothing to his friend about the missing violin. It had been quite a disappointment to him when he learned that it had been stolen, the empty case having been found under the bridge.

When Sharpe had ceased speaking, Gould said, "Have you seen your violin?"

"No—no; not yet."

"You must before you go. It's up behind those books. I put it there the night I was hurt. I had put on a new set of strings and was gradually stretching them. I wanted it handy. The books conceal it, but it is there."

Sharpe rarely became excited, but on this occasion he rushed to the bookcase, and finding the violin carefully examined it.

"There is a bow on the shelf," said Harmon. "Try it."

Sharpe was a passably good player. He sat down in front of the fire, which glowed and danced to the music. For more than an hour he played, forgetting everything save the joy he felt in the possession of that wonderful instrument.

Finally the music ceased. The player looked into the fire, then glanced at the homely comforts of the room, the solid logs, the fur-covered floor, the glowing embers, the living picture of a mountain's brow at one window and the silvery waters gliding unceasingly by at another, the soft prevailing quietness. Everything was so natural, so free, so restful, that this man of the world rose, and going to the bedside, said:

"Jay, I would want to live forever if I could live here. How poor we are in great cities! I never shall be contented until I own a log house, have a fireplace like this, just such fur rugs and big ash chairs, low couches, see such living pictures through my windows, hear the waters run, and—Look! Look! There are two deer under the window! How beautiful they are! Ah! Jay, I must have them too. If I live, before another year, I will 'abide me' in a log cabin.

"Did you ever think, Jay, that I would become so poetic? I begin to hope, even to believe, that these woods will do for me what

the forest of Arden did not for melancholy
Jaques but for the banished Duke:

“ ‘ And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.’ ”

The week that followed was one of unalloyed pleasure to Sharpe. Being assured that Gould was on the road to certain recovery, that perfect quiet was what he needed, Sharpe, with the Major, Jim Gramme and Lige Fessenden, (who closed his shop to go), with two canoes well stocked with tents and supplies, started up the river towards Chesuncook. On the way Lige, who was in his best trim, told the story of Lois going to Greensburg for the doctor, on foot and alone in the darkness and rain. It lost nothing by the telling. He pictured the narrow walk on the bridge, its dizzy height above the water, the possible crossing of the train due about that hour, the terrifying fact that the would-be murderers were abroad, that she had seen them in the bridge. All this did not daunt her, but fear-

lessly she had made her way through the darkness, climbed the steep embankment, and finally reached Greensburg.

Lige waxed eloquent. The Major was seen to swallow. When Lige had finished, Sharpe, with great gravity, turned to the Major and said:

"I have not heard a better story of a woman's devotion and courage since, when a boy, I heard the account of Ida Lewis's heroism in the harbor of Newport. Such a woman should be the mother of ten children at least, all boys," he added grimly, "for the mother decides the quality of the man, be it for good or evil. I beg the honor of meeting this daughter. Miss Madeline I have met, and at your table yesterday noon I learned to my surprise that everything had been prepared by her hands, and to my thinking it was excellently done. Her serving was equally surprising; and the thought occurred to me, Major Crosby, that there is no such thing as a menial service, except when a menial spirit serves. I am correcting some mistaken ideas I have had on

this subject. I desire, my dear Major, to congratulate you upon your home, and the women of your home."

The Major never quite understood how much this meant from the lips of Lionel Sharpe. He explained to him that Lois went to Greensburg in the morning and returned at night; that she was obliged to study her French lessons diligently evenings in order to fill her mother's place and not lower the standard of her teaching.

While in camp Sharpe became almost like a boy, dropping his reserve as far as it was possible for him to do so. He liked all the men in the party. Each was a character, not a type. Each was a natural man, and responded promptly to every touch of nature, according to his free spirit. The Major grew upon Sharpe. There were many gentle and unselfish acts which he unconsciously performed towards all his friends. These were not lost upon the observing Sharpe, who thought to himself in the words of Tupper, "Trifles lighter than straws are levers in building up a

character." He had been surprised to hear the blacksmith, at the close of his account of Lois's night adventure, quote from "Much Ado" these lines:

"The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into this study of imagination,
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit."

When they returned to Sunny Point they found Gould sitting up. The doctor said in another week he could have the bandages removed.

That night a big fire was built in the large wing bedroom occupied by Gould. The Squire had "dropped in" and taken a seat one side of the hearth. The fire lit up the fine old face, and Lionel Sharpe, who sat in the great ash chair in the center, with his long limbs extended and an expression of meditative restfulness upon his face, was looking at the old man and thinking, "That is one of the best faces I ever saw; a symbol of kindness, wisdom and honor; a face that would never

betray." At his left sat the Major, his pale face aglow with the spirit of hospitality and good cheer. All men pleased him, and his life seemed abundant.

In the living room sat Carter. It was his last evening with Madeline. He was to return to Millinocket the next morning, to arrange for his successor. Gould had been playing with the violin muted. The last strains had died away, and there followed a silence filled with echoes which the soul alone can hear. A stillness almost painful prevailed, suddenly broken by Sharpe, who asked—and it seemed strangely out of season—this question:

"Mr. Gray and Mr. Crosby, I wish you to tell me what you would do for the good of mankind if you had all the money necessary at your command. Don't answer too quickly. It is not an idle question. I am quite serious."

The Major was the first to reply: "Mr. Sharpe, I have long ago made up my mind what I would do."

"I am very much interested to know. Tell me fully."

"A few years ago I made a tour with the School Superintendent of the State through the northern and eastern portions of this county, visiting nearly every school. We found that in the larger towns some of the schoolhouses were commodious and comfortable, but in most of the small towns and plantations they were cold and cheerless. They were generally a one-room affair, with no cellar, the foundation loose field-stones, in many cases a single-boarded floor, and one stove to supply warmth. When winter came the cold winds blew under the building and upon the feet and limbs of the children. The snow would sift through the loose sash and broken panes of the windows, chilling their bodies and filling the schoolhouse with discomfort almost amounting to misery. Here was laid in thousands of instances the seeds of the dreaded consumption, which has been the scourge of Maine, as twenty per cent. of her people die of this disease. I know these things to be true, because I have experienced them. Besides, in these dreary rooms there was no cheer, no

pictures, no animating colors, no conveniences, no means of entertaining the scholars while being instructed, no interesting apparatus to illustrate the simple sciences,—nothing but a bare room with a shivering teacher and suffering children. Had I the means, I would try to do on a humbler scale what Andrew Carnegie is doing on a great scale; supply warm, tastefully-built, commodious schoolhouses for the children of these poor towns. There should be something of beauty about them in form and structure that would suggest to the impressionable minds their noble purpose. They should have grace and strength. They should have conveniences and comforts to promote health, not destroy it. They should be supplied with the best magazines and papers, and from these reading exercises should be selected. Globes, maps, and simple apparatus to illustrate the common sciences, might be added.

“It is borne in upon me that in no way could a rich man spend his money to do greater good, supply a greater need, and bless not only

the present generation, but the generations to come, than in making the schoolrooms in this or any State places of cheer and comfort, where our children would go with joy, their hearts and minds open, perceptions alert, to receive and doubly profit from instructions received under these alluring circumstances. Oh, had I the means, how quickly would I act! How great would be my reward!"

Sharpe had listened with evident interest. Gould had watched his friend's face as the Major unfolded his scheme of philanthropy. He knew, as no one else present knew, the deep impression the Major's remarks had made upon Sharpe.

After a moment of silence Sharpe turned to the Major.

"Would you undertake to do this work of supplying schoolhouses, such as you conceive, if you had the necessary money placed at your disposal?"

"I should feel that Almighty God had blessed me beyond all computation if I could do this work."

"Now, Mr. Gray, what is your scheme of philanthropy?"

There was a reminiscent look in the deep eyes of the Squire as he replied:

"I agree with the Major. This would be a work which would bring incalculable benefit to thousands of children who too often leave the schools at an early age, not altogether because they do not care to pursue their studies, but because the severe discomforts of the schoolrooms hazard their health. If you should visit one of these isolated schools some cold winter day and hear the children cough it would make your heart ache. The Major is right. This is an opportunity for a philanthropist. But, alas! it cannot be hoped for. Too rarely does the possessor of wealth possess also a noble spirit of philanthropy."

Sharpe knew that the remarks of these two men contained no innuendoes directed to him. They had no knowledge of his great wealth. He was looked upon as a prosperous business man of rather eccentric ideas, as the purchase of the violin had led many to believe, but that

he was many times a millionaire they never dreamed.

"Have you no pet project, Mr. Gray? Most men have," said Sharpe.

"Yes, I have a pet project, but like those schoolhouses of the Major's it is a thing that dreams are made of. Only a dream."

"Let us hear your dream," said Sharpe.

"For many years," began the Squire, "I was surveyor of timber lands. This gave me an opportunity to explore the Maine woods from Mattawamkeag to Madawska. I learned to love these woods, so interminable, so majestic, so silent. I felt their strength, their dumb friendship, breathed their spicy air, drank their waters; lived with them, in them, and became a part of them, at least in spirit and fraternity. There was a time when I thought that no destruction 'that walks abroad' could imperil them; I recked not of the greed of the modern man, and the improved means by which he could compass the destruction of anything that would pay him six per cent. I was foolish enough to think

that a State which had produced so many men of brain and iron from the days of George Evans to Thomas B. Reed, a State having more influence at the federal capital than any three in the Union, would have soul, sense and wisdom enough to preserve the most magnificent park under high heaven, not only for the children of this State, but for America. Alas, they have overlooked the fact that the great force and intellect which has been so dominant in her children has been the transmuting of the forest air, of its leaves and balsam, of its pure waters, into men and women. And they have known it not.

“That domain of unravished nature is doomed, unless some great spirit, with a ‘tongue of flame’ and money to boot, can call the attention of the nation to this great physician, to this Balm of Gilead, that still survives and can be saved to bless unborn generations if only an agitation can be set in motion that shall wake up the whole nation to this worse than suicide of its holy wood and water.

“Had I the influence and eloquence I would

seek the country's ear and tell of another national park extending from the Ambejejus on the south to Churchill's lake on the northwest; from Sebois and Grand Lake on the east to Chesuncook and the Allagash on the west; while Katahdin, rearing its glorious head and flinging down its shadows on half a thousand lakes, should dominate all. It is within the lines of possibility that some great soul or souls could be found to buy Katahdin and a million acres around her base, and give it to the birds of the air, to the deer, the moose and the caribou, to the quaint and harmless bear, to the fox, the beaver and the little musquash even, and say to them 'in the beginning God gave these woods and streams to you, but man has usurped your bowers and filled your simple lives with fear and peril. I give them back on the condition that man and beast shall lie down together in this garden of God in peace.'"

There were tears in the old man's eyes as he continued, "Pardon me, but this subject lies very near my heart. It is my dream. Alas, that it is only a dream! I cannot hope

that the people of the State or the nation will ever attain to the knowledge that right here, within twenty-four hours of forty millions of people, God has made a park that would accommodate them all, if used for the beneficent purpose for which it would appear heaven had ordained it."

Not a word was spoken for a long time, but right there a parturition had taken place in the form of a resolve and purpose in the soul of Lionel Sharpe. He knew that he had heard the word, that his mission had been pointed out, all unwittingly, in that plain log room, by the two simple men who never suspected the agitation that their words had caused.

"Major Crosby," he began, "I am a man who has never done much good in this world, but have been waiting for an opportunity. You have pointed the way. I wish to deputize you and Squire Gray to make preparations to carry out your idea of providing comfortable school-houses wherever in this county—for the present we will confine it to this county—you think they are needed. I will send an architect at

once, capable of selecting sites and drafting plans suitable to the needs of the place.

"I request that the communities enjoying these benefits agree to make no effort to learn who their benefactor is. It is sufficient reward for me to know that I am doing some practical good. I will place in the bank in B—— fifty thousand dollars, subject to your call. Trust to me to properly reward your services.

"The Katahdin scheme also interests me. I have many wealthy friends who I think will be glad to join me in trying to preserve these woods, at least in part, from the avarice of the people of Maine. I promise you to set in motion an agitation that I hope will result in checking this wanton destruction.

"Now Major Crosby and Squire Gray, are you willing to take hold with me and endeavor to transmute your dreams into facts?"

The two men spoke as one and answered, "We are."

And thus began in the little hamlet of Falling Water the agitation of a scheme which, though not yet realized, is moving on; for men

of wisdom and wealth are learning where best their great fortunes can serve mankind. Gifts of comely and comfortable schoolhouses, libraries, and all that go to promote civilization, are the multiplied facts of the hour.

The great woods, it is hoped, are soon to be rescued by the nation, and another park surpassing the Yellowstone in its availability to the American people will be a fact.

CHAPTER XVII

THE following night Gould and Carter called upon Sharpe at the Squire's. They occupied the great sitting-room. The night being chilly a fire had been kindled upon the cheerful hearth, and the three friends were enjoying it.

"Squire Gray," said Gould, "now that the plans are nearly perfected for carrying forward Mr. Sharpe's scheme of philanthropy, suppose you open the door leading into the store so that we can hear your friends and neighbors talk. I have assured Mr. Sharpe that it is in itself an entertainment."

"Certainly. The old ten are there already, and are as full of talk as an egg is of meat. Brother Lige, as usual, has the floor."

The door was opened, and there came floating into the room the voices of the men gathered around the fire.

"Wall, they do say," quoth Lige, "that little Joey Crosby is pindling. He never got over the plunge in the river. John Crosby is distracted and has had nearly every doctor in the county. I tell you, boys, he's a changed man. He don't have anything to say against Mr. Gould now. His saving that eight thousand dollars for John jest softened his hard heart, and little Joey seems to love Gould. He axed for him several times to-day, John says. I suspect if Mr. Gould knew it, it would be jest like him to forget everything and go and see that boy."

Somebody said "Here comes Link Lincoln," and the drummer came bustling in, and in his breezy manner saluted everyone.

"Hullo, Lige. I am glad to see you. John, is that you? Why wasn't you home to receive me at the tavern? Someone's got my room. I wrote to you to save it. Hullo, Bige! How's your phthisic? I say, Jake, since I was here I've heard that you've been pretty rich. Rich a whole week. How did it seem?"

"Oh, you let up on a feller," said Jake Cornish. "You've been a fool yourself, Link."

"That's so, Jake."

Lincoln subsided and was silent until Lige inquired:

"What's the matter, Link? Business dull?"

"Worse than that, Lige. Lost another girl! Best one this time."

"We knowed that," chimed in Bige Crabtree, with a grin. "Seen Abby Smart?"

"Yes," said Link, with a note of dejection. "You see it's this way. I went down as usual to see Madeline. She didn't seem exactly tickled to death to see me, but treated me well enough. Everybody is treated well at the Major's, you know. I knew that something was wrong. I had half a suspicion when I was there before that my zither had ruined my chances. When you put a zither against a violin the zither has no show. I felt myself, after I heard that man Gould play, that the halo I had tried to spread over Madeline had just been lifted, dispelled as it were. There are no staying qualities to a zither. You can

amuse a bright girl a little while. You can make her laugh, but you can't make her cry. If you want to get a girl solid you want to play so that she will cry."

"Thar you're right," broke in Lige. "That Gould nigh broke my heart that night, and I'd give him a dollar to do it agen. The man that will make you cry will beat the man that will make you laugh. But go on, Link, We'd like to hear, wouldn't we, boys?"

They all assented.

"I soon smelt a large mouse, and didn't waste myself at Sunny Point. On my way to the tavern I met Abby Smart."

There was a low "he! he!" heard in Bige's corner.

"Well, Abby was loaded. She took me by the second button, and reeled off the whole story. 'Now, Link Lincoln,' she began, 'you jest thought that among the girls you was invisible, especially when you played the zither.' (Damn the zither, I thought to myself.) 'You'll jest find out you're not, for you are clean cut out down at Crosby's. There's a

feller come over here from Millinocket. They call him a silver engineer. He's a little feller with big eyes, thin face, and a tremor voice. He jest sang to that Madeline until he tangled her heart all up. And the poor little thing is dreadful taken up with him. Why, they would walk in front of my house hand in hand, oliverous to everybody. Didn't seem to care what I thought about 'em. It was jest sickening.'

"I left Abby. I had heard enough. I saw that my zither work had utterly failed. So I am on the market again for a girl. The trouble with me, boys, is that it's the finest kind of a girl I like; the smart, pretty, honest ones. But they all seem to size me and my zither up, and after a while they say very sweetly, 'Good-by Link.' They forget to say 'Come again,' and I take the hint. You know, boys, I liked Helen pretty well at one time, but when Lige's son, the minister, began to preach at Greensburg he lifted my zither halo the first sermon he preached. And she said 'Good-by, Link,' very sweetly, one night. But I must find an-

other, and I have made up my mind that I am going to court the next girl, propose, and marry her in twenty-four hours. That's the only way I will ever get a wife."

"Oh, there's five hundred girls," broke in John Cary, "between here and Ashland that would be glad to marry you, if you'll take off those sunrise shoes, throw away that red necktie, and leave your zither at home."

"They wouldn't know me," replied Link.

"That would be just where you would win," said Jake Cornish. "You'd have 'em at a disadvantage."

Link put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a newspaper.

"I say, boys, there's something here that will set the whole county talking, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, Falling Water will be printed on the next map in large letters. It's the biggest thing for you people since that man Gould set the whole country talking about the hero of Falling Water. Now, cock your ears up. This is the *Boston Herald*, which copied it from the *New York Herald*."

Everyone was on the alert; the little group in the sitting-room was equally attentive. Lincoln stepped in front of them, and read as follows:

"There arrived in New York from Paris, on the steamer *Normandie* to-day, Mons. Pierre de Neumoirs, his mission to this country being to find the heir of Carl de Neumoirs, his elder brother, who, with his wife, was lost at sea. There was a daughter, Hortense, left by the parents in Canada, and it is this daughter who is one of the heirs to her grandfather's estate in France. It is thought that she is still living. Anyone having knowledge of such a person as is here mentioned will be suitably rewarded by informing Mons. Pierre de Neumoirs, Victoria Hotel, New York."

"What do you think of that, boys? It took your humble servant just ten minutes to wire this de Neumoirs just where he could find the said Hortense; for you know, or you ought to know, that Major Crosby's wife was Hortense de Neumoirs. I claimed the reward, and I'm looking for something handsome. If I get it we'll have a smoker right here, and they won't be two-fers either."

Here they were interrupted by hearing an agitated voice say:

"Young man, will you allow me to see that paper?"

They looked up to see the tall form of Sharpe standing in the doorway, with Gould and Carter near.

Sharpe read the article. When he had finished he said to Squire Gray, "Is there a train to Boston to-night?"

"At half-past ten. You have forty minutes," said the Squire.

Addressing Lincoln, Sharpe said, "Your name and address, young man. Here is my note-book. I will see that you are properly rewarded."

The next morning Sharpe was steaming out of Boston for New York. Carter returned to Millinocket.

The night succeeding Lois and Gould stood together over the bed of little Joey, who was dying. The distracted father had sent for them. The mother, weary with her vigils and crushed with grief, lay in the adjoining

room, too weak to attend to the needs of her dying child.

At the bedside Gould saw in the face of Lois an expression of such love as only the face of a pure soul, spiritualized by grief, can manifest. Never had she seemed more beautiful than when, bending over the little form, she tenderly kissed the pallid face, and with a look of love and pity watched the little soul go out into eternity; closing the white lids down for the last time. Then she sank into a chair, her sobs choked back that they might not reach the ears of the almost unconscious mother, who had been spared the agony of the last moment.

She stifled her sobs, stepped into the next room and as gently as possible told her uncle that little Joey was dead. The father had expected it, but the end was a shock to him, and the house was filled with his lamentations. When he had calmed somewhat Gould said to him: "The doctor is here, Mr. Crosby, and if you will let your man assist me to harness, I will go to Greensburg and attend to all necessary arrangements. If you choose to have me

I will take the care and preparation of the funeral off your hands."

"God bless you, Jay Gould!" said the grief-stricken father. "I understand now what my brother meant when he said that you came to them 'like a angel.'"

One month from that date Gould was in Millinocket, installed in the position made vacant by Carter, while Lois and her mother were on the Atlantic, en route to Paris to meet their kinsfolk in that city.

Carter was in Colorado, and had written Gould that he had been greatly benefited by the change.

The Major and his son Albert, Jim Gramme, and the old Squire were busy with their plans of far-reaching benefits. They are as dumb as oysters, and the group around the fireplace exhausted its ingenuity in trying to find out "what's afoot."

Madeline is still mistress at Sunny Point; a little lonely, but the long letters from Colorado partially compensate for the absence of her mother and sister.

CHAPTER XVIII

ONE evening Sharpe sat quietly smoking in Gould's room. The rude comforts about him were magnified by the soft light from the fireplace; which lent something of beauty and poetry to the massive timbers composing the room.

The broad couch with its bear-skin robe, the suggestive restfulness of the heavy chairs, the fur rugs scattered in an easy abandon on the floor, the great open fireplace, the general harmony of everything conduced to give rest and serenity to this man of the world.

In his own home there were lying about unnoticed many trinkets whose value was greater than all the furnishings of this room; aye, of the entire house. Yet he did not remember that there had ever come to him in that luxurious home such a feeling of tranquillity and settled ease as he now enjoyed, under the bare rafters of that rough room and

before the cheering blaze of the rude stone fireplace.

“What is the secret of this unaccountable contentment?” he asked himself. “Have I, like many other men, been made a ‘fool of my senses’? Have I wasted my life by trying to maintain it under the extremes of luxurious living? I fear so.

“Here, as Emerson says, ‘I can drop the heavy knapsack of custom from my shoulders, and know—freedom.’”

Gould had been softly playing on the muted violin during the silent soliloquy of his friend. The music had stolen into the heart of Sharpe, rendering it almost tender. A strange contentment possessed him and, like the philosopher that he was, he tried to analyze it.

A knock at the door interrupted the flow of the music and the thoughts of the philosopher.

Going to the door Gould admitted Squire Gray and the old hunter, Jim Gramme.

After a hearty hand-shake they were soon seated around the hearth, the Major coming in to join the group.

"Do you smoke, Mr. Gramme?" asked Sharpe.

"A pipe sometimes," he answered in a low voice.

"Pipes are much more social on occasions like this," said Sharpe.

He arose, and going to a deep niche in the side of the chimney, brought forth a box of corn cob pipes, also one of tobacco; and soon the blending smoke of the group was slowly drifting towards and into the mouth of the chimney.

After some minutes of that silent bliss, known only to congenial smokers, Squire Gray removed his pipe and said, "Mr. Gould, Mr. Gramme has come over this evening to thank you for what you did for his boy, Jim. It has been on his mind for a long time to come and tell you; but being a very modest man, he feared to come alone, and so he asked me to accompany him."

Before Gramme could speak Gould said, "There are no thanks due me, Mr. Gramme. It is I who should thank your son, for I con-

sider he saved my life at the Falls. It was your son who held the rope on which my life depended. In the midst of that cataract of moving logs, that would have terrified most men, he held his ground. Your son took a terrible chance and had he flinched one moment I should not be here to-night. I am proud to reckon so brave a man among my friends, and I honor you, Mr. Gramme, as his father. You should be proud of such a son."

For a moment the old man sat silently looking into the fire. Then seeming to ignore Gould, he addressed himself to Sharpe:

"Yer friend here seems ruther a puzzle to us 'ere folks. We can't understand him nohow. He ain't like anything we ever had round here. When anyone wants a friend or someone to help 'em out of a trap, he seems to be right thar to do it. And when he gits 'em out he thanks 'em for the privilege of doing it. That's jist a little beyond my understanding. Now, I've been trying to git it through my old head how he argered it round hisself that one-half of that money which the company gave

him for bustin' the jam on Grand Falls belonged to my boy Jim. He didn't bust the jam. All he did was to hold the rope. That wasn't worth noting. But this 'ere curus chap, er, er—Mr. Gould I mean, made Jim take it—jammed it right into his pocket; telling him to knock off work and go to school—and Jim's did it. And now this man says that Jim and I don't owe him nothing, not even thanks. But we do, Mr. Sharpe, and Jim and I will jist keep thinking so as long as the waters flow over Grand Falls."

There was no mistaking the sincerity of the old man's gratitude. Gould appeared embarrassed. The Major went out with moistened eyes, but soon returned with wood to replenish the fire.

Sharpe had listened with unmoved face to all that had been said. Finally he turned to the group saying, "My friends, Mr. Gramme's stories of his experience in the woods which I heard him tell the other night have possessed me with a desire to realize what it is to be alone in the woods. It may strike you as a

little strange when I state that I never was alone in my life; I mean, never beyond the voice of man nor the sound of his footsteps. Now, I have a great desire to camp out a few days on the shore of some lake, all alone; to see no one, to hear no one, save the wild habitat of the wood and sky; to cut my own wood, to build my fires, to cook my food, to serve—myself. I never have had such an experience. Now seems my opportunity. Men have served me through my life, but I have not served them; it is time I did. I will begin with myself. Mr. Gramme, I shall ask you as an experienced man, to help me to find a place where for two days I can enjoy undisturbed by anyone ‘the social silence of nature.’ What I require to make me comfortable, please furnish me. And I shall be glad to pay you.”

And so it was arranged. About three o’clock the following day Sharpe and Gramme came to the shore of a lake about six miles from Falling Water and unburdened the jumper on which the supplies for the camp had been brought.

"Shall I help you pitch the tent?" inquired Gramme.

"I thank you, yes. That is one thing I am sure I could not do."

While pitching the tent Gramme instructed Sharpe how to make his bed, build the fire and keep it burning, and many other things appertaining to camp life.

The spot selected was Birch Point on Old Molunk. It was near the lake and greatly to the liking of Sharpe.

"Mr. Gramme, you can go now. Two days from this hour come for me." They shook hands, and Sharpe watched the figure of the old guide until it disappeared in the heavy woods back of the tent.

And Lionel Sharpe for the first time in his life was alone.

He tried to realize that he was alone. That for which he had hungered and thirsted was his, but he could not seem to grasp the fact. The last words of the old man still lingered in his mind: "Yer will have to work lively to have things ready by sundown. Darkness comes

on sort o' quick in the woods after the sun draps out."

"Well, I think I'll build a fire first," he thought. "No, I'll prepare my bed while it is light. Let me see. I want two sticks about six inches in diameter, 'Six inches through,' as Gramme would say. One three feet long, the other seven and a half. 'These will keep me from rolling out of bed' Gramme said."

He felled a near-by poplar and cutting the lengths desired laid them down in one corner of the tent; and driving some pins each side, went forth to find a "mattress," as he called it.

He began breaking off small boughs from the low fir trees, hooking them around his ax handle. By laying them in a circle one branch supported the other until the entire length of the handle was taken up. He went back to the tent and spread them on the ground. This he repeated, each time selecting shorter tips until his couch was completed. He spread his blankets and arranged his bed with great care.

He then built his fire outside, first having

driven his crotched stakes, and provided a long green pole on which to hang his kettle.

This had taken some time, but he had not noticed its flight, so taken up was he with his supper.

Now he would prepare his supper with his own hands. He followed closely the instructions of Gramme and succeeded in making a cup of tea, boiling potatoes, toasting bread and frying a small piece of ham. And when for the first time he spread his simple meal on the top of the rough box which served him as a table he felt that he had done something unusual, something decidedly creditable. He could not have told why he was so pleased and proud, yet he was, and he found himself humming an old song that he had heard in his childhood days. "We hunted and hallooed and the next thing we did find," etc.

He washed his dishes and put them away carefully. Then taking his pipe and folding stool he went down to the shore, sat down to enjoy the coming on of the night, and tried to realize that he was indeed—alone.

In front of him were the bright waters which touched the shores with gleaming ripples, sending up, as it seemed to him, gurgling happy laughter as they sported at his feet. Back of him were the dark, soft outlines of the fragrant and comforting woods, and still farther away he could faintly discern the serene and solemn outlines of Katahdin dominating everything. And over all hovered peace and a wide, sweet silence that his soul had long yearned for.

He watched the purple light fall upon the lake and gradually deepen into darkness. The heavy-skirted shores for a long while remained gloomily visible, and when at last he returned to his tent he fell into a sleep that comes only to a man in the depths of the woods where there is fragrant warmth, ease and careless freedom, for here all nature conjoins to hypnotize the senses and "Steep them in (utter) forgetfulness."

When Sharpe awoke the sun had risen above the forest and was pouring its light into his tent. For a moment he could not account for

his being there. His sleep had been so profound and dreamless that he was unable to make himself believe that a full night of time had actually passed since he had lain down to sleep.

He arose, and putting on a bathing suit he ran down to the pebbly shore to take a dip before preparing his breakfast. The lake lay like a mirror before him. There was not the slightest ripple on its surface.

The great woods sloped down to its shores, framing the waters in living green. There was something exhilarating in the taintless air that came to him over the woods and waters. He felt that he must shout, so full was he of ecstasy. All this surpassing beauty and grandeur was his; for was he not—alone?

Suddenly his attention was drawn to a white birch tree growing very near the water. Something protruded from the trunk. It was moving, swinging about. As there was no wind Sharpe knew that it could not be the flutter of a leaf or movement of a shrub.

He approached it and saw with feelings of

indignation and pity that someone had trapped a muskrat in a rather peculiar and very cruel manner.

A large hole had been bored in the tree just above the ground. A horse-shoe nail drawn and sharpened had been toe-nailed just below the opening, the point passing through the wood and into the hole. At the further end of the hole and beyond the point of the nail the cunning trapper had placed a piece of fish. The hungry little animal had crowded his head in that he might seize the fish. Its throat would slide over the cruel point, but when he attempted to withdraw it the nail would pierce his neck and hold him until the trapper came. How long the poor creature had suffered Sharpe did not for a moment consider; but running back to the tent, hastily throwing on his coat, he seized an ax and started to release the suffering animal. It was necessary to proceed carefully in order not to kill the rat while cutting him out. He finally released him and felt happy when he saw the little animal swim swiftly away; and Sharpe imagined him re-

counting his terrible experience to his furry kindred.

He was about to return when a canoe appeared around a bend in the lake, and in it was a little black-whiskered man who seemed greatly excited. He brought the canoe to the shore near where Sharpe stood, leaped out and running up to the tree shouted, "Tort Dieu!" Then turning to Sharpe he said fiercely, "Where is ze rat dat you stole me? He is mine, by gar. You gif him me, I keel you —no!"

The man was quite small, but his manner was threatening and his wrath genuine. He ran to the canoe and seizing a small hatchet advanced again towards Sharpe.

"Where you hide ze rat? He was all I haf to eat. My leeble seek girl she haf noding to eat. I haf noding to eat. You vey bad to tak our brakfast."

To say that Sharpe was astonished was to say very little. He said nothing but stood looking at the little man who was still dancing around him and swearing in French under his

breath. The Frenchman had been awed somewhat by the stately dignity of the stranger and would not have dared to assault him. Sharpe's mind had worked quickly. He took in the situation at once. He felt no indignation, only pity. There flashed through his mind the immeasurable difference between himself and the little man before him. He a millionaire, one who could command the choicest things of earth; the other a man in despair because he had lost a muskrat. Did the world ever furnish a more striking contrast and a wider difference in the fortunes of men?

Then Sharpe advancing towards the man asked in kindly tones, "May I ask your name?"

"Pierre Coma." And a sudden calm came over Pierre.

"Where do you live?"

"Down by ze dam at ze outlet."

"Did you say that you had a sick child?"

"Oui! oui! Poor little 'Toinette. She look for her pere dis meenit. I strak ze bad luck."

Everyting he go agin Pierre. Will Monsieur not gif poor Pierre the muskrat for his leele girl?"

The pleading eyes of the poor father touched the heart of Sharpe. "I will give you more. Come with me. I did not steal your rat, but cut him out and gave him his liberty. I could not see him suffer so. Had I known his worth to you I would have mercifully killed him."

Coma, like most foreigners, understood English much more readily than he could speak it. And both by words and tones he realized that the man before him was friendly and meant him only good.

"Merci, Monsieur; merci, merci. Pierre he was a beeg blame fool. Monsieur, grand, magnificent, Pierre should know. But ze bad luck made Pierre fool. He afraid that ze Holy Mother had forgotten poor Pierre. He pray for her help. It not come."

Sharpe turned quickly saying, "Pray again, Pierre, and she will hear." And Sharpe paused and Pierre fell on his knees and prayed.

When they reached the camp Sharpe told

his man to sit down and he would prepare a breakfast for him.

"Non—non, Monsieur. 'Toinette she cry her eye bad out. She eat before her pere. He no appetite till she eat."

"Well, Pierre, here are two partridges that we shot last night. Take these. Are you a good cook?"

"Bon Dieu! Pierre he mos fine cook. Ze bird he good for Toinette."

"Wait a moment," said Sharpe as Pierre started away with his birds. "I want to send your little 'Toinette some other things. I must make up to you for that lost muskrat."

The shores of that lake might have seen one of New York's proudest aristocrats sharing his stores, waiting and serving one who from a social point stood at the bottom rung of the ladder. So this man of wealth and consequence served with joy and satisfaction the wretched little Frenchman, "a waif upon the shores of time and chance."

Sharpe did not inform Pierre that he should break camp the following day, but told him to

come in the morning as he wanted to hear how his little girl was getting along.

He had noted the look of happiness in Pierre's face and thought how little it takes to make the very poor happy.

Somehow Sharpe was glad to know that he was not alone, and when the night settled again and spread its dark curtain over the waters and the woods he knew that on the other shore somewhere were 'Toinette and her father, and the thought was not unpleasing.

That night the sleep of Lionel Sharpe was not dreamless. It was not the great affairs of life that passed before him in his dreams, but the face and figure of the grateful Pierre Coma, the poor drifting vagabond whose misfortune had somehow touched his heart, for under all the outward uncouthness—almost repulsive, he had seen the pure gold of a father's love. "That one touch of nature had made them kin."

Sharpe slept late. But Pierre, at an early hour, had crossed over and drawn his canoe silently upon the shore. He had brought three

fine trout, caught that morning. Very quietly he gathered wood for the fire, and as quietly started it. He brought water, filled the kettle and hung it over the flames. Going to the shore he dressed the fish and then returning sat down to wait for Sharpe. He soon appeared at the door of the tent, and to his surprise saw 'Toinette's father seated upon the ground before the fire, happy and triumphant; for had not the Holy Mother heard his prayer and sent him food and a friend? Were not the eyes of his little 'Toinette bright again and his cabin made joyous with her song?

Who would take from these poor simple children of nature their blessed comforting faith?

The two men ate their breakfast together. No caste obtained that day. Out of their tin plates and cups each man ate and drank—the millionaire and the moneyless.

Pierre's love for his child had leveled all things, all distinctions, and struck straight into the heart of Lionel Sharpe. When night had come again Pierre Coma felt that he was a rich

man. For had he not enough to eat for many days, and had he not money? "Oui, oui." Two ten-dollar bills, one for Pierre, and one for little Toinette. The Holy Mother had indeed smiled on that little family in the woods and they were happy, and Lionel Sharpe was happy too, though he knew not why. He had learned something deep and profound, viz.: That there was a common plane of humanity on which all the children of God could meet, and that love "could climb over all castes, all distinctions, and claim its own."

CHAPTER XIX

AS from the brain of Jupiter, Minerva sprang fully armed, so from out of the woods of Maine sprang the virgin city of Millinocket equipped with life. On plain and prairie, on lake shore and ocean front, cities have sprung into instant entity, begotten by the feculent and compelling blood of a nation. But far removed from the central heartbeat of the land, and where it would seem that no seed had been planted, in a dreary wilderness and amidst the icy currents of the north, was born this vigorous child, unheralded and unprophesied.

Two years have passed since Gould began his labors at Millinocket. He had brought to this unique city youth and vigor, trained muscles, educated faculties, and a high purpose. He had come in a good time. All things seemed awaiting his advent. In less than six

months the great corporation congratulated itself on having secured the services of so remarkably capable a man. At the end of the year he was made general manager of the great enterprise, and all things were referred to him as to a court of last assize. His salary had been doubled, and he was recognized as a power to be dealt with. But never did his quiet modesty forsake him, nor his natural dignity. His executive ability was great, but there was no bluster, no loud words. Lambert had become one of his trusted lieutenants, as had Jim Gramme. Albert Crosby was secretary of the company; and the handsome, cheerful, music-loving Henri Fornier was Gould's devoted servitor, trusted and never failing.

In a cove on the south shore of the lake and nearly half a mile from the town Gould had built a comfortable log house, containing one large room and three bedrooms. A kitchen adjoined the main house. In this somewhat retired home Gould studied and planned his work for the company. Here were kept his charts and maps, here were drafted the great

buildings and plans of mills, and here the directors met to counsel with him. There was a general office in the city, of which Albert was in charge. He was the one man who was always in touch with his chief, but so great was the demand of Gould's time that Albert was left to judge whether or not the caller had business of sufficient importance to warrant his chief's attention. Thus was Superintendent Gould guarded by his secretary from many draughts on his strength and time that would have been fruitless of results for the company.

Henri was the trusted factotum of the superintendent's bungalow, as well as its light and joy. It was a delightful place, and the great men of the company found in it a restfulness —a something which made them loath to leave the place. It contained a good piano, many pictures, and more than a thousand books which Gould had gathered, and on the wall, from a common nail, hung Henri's violin, with which at times he would "witch the air" with his French hornpipes, reels, jigs, waltzes and

the quaint airs of his home-folk that he had learned when a child at Basin Minas. The good taste of Gould and the aptitude of Henri had resulted in making the superintendent's bungalow the most popular resort in town. It had become known through Henri that Gould was a violinist of rare power, and Henry Hooven, the big, breezy, good-natured president of the company, worth his millions, never seemed so happy as when he was able to steal away from his apartments at the hotel and come, with his idolized daughter Dolly, and sit before the great fire that was eating away the four-foot logs. He would stretch out his feet, load up a fresh T. D. pipe, loll back in the big chair made of native wood, and listen while Henri would play and dance with a grace and skill known only to children of his blood.

Dolly would laugh in her frank, sweet way, and say to her father: "Papa, build me a bungalow right here, and get a little Frenchman like Henri who can cook and dance just as he can. I should be happy, and could have you with me." And she would put her arms around her

father's neck and kiss his round, red face. The wifeless old man would look into her brown eyes and see there the same light of love that looked out upon him so many happy years from her mother's eyes.

"Dolly, do you really want a bungalow?"

"Yes, and a big one, so that I can have my friends come down and show them what a dear papa I have got, how beautiful the woods and waters are, and how happy people can be here in a log house without butlers, maids, and other tiresome things that make so much trouble and add so little to real life."

"My dear, you shall have one as soon as our superintendent can spare the time to attend to its building. Wouldn't you like to hear Mr. Gould play, Dolly? His playing is like my old parson's prayers, which I feel the need of occasionally."

"Oh, yes. But he is so busy."

"I am still the boss! He worked half the night, and will to-night if you don't prevent it. Go and tell him that the president of the company wants to see him." And Dolly went

tripping across the fur-rugged floor into the draughting room, where Gould was working. In a few moments she came back pulling him along by one hand and holding in the other Henri's violin.

"I knew what papa wanted, Mr. Gould, so I brought this with me. You play and I will sit down on this bear skin and fold myself up like a 'Dutch tailor,' as papa says. He's Dutch himself, you know. Hooven is awful Dutch," and the unspoiled child of wealth sank upon the bear skin, folded her hands on her lap and looked up into the handsome face above her, and said, with perfect alertness:

"The princess will hear her prince, while the great king snores."

Hooven was quite in the habit, under the influence of the music and fire, of falling asleep, and his daughter had often chided him for doing so.

"It's a compliment to him, Dolly. He does with his violin what a whole orchestra cannot do. Let the band play," he said with mock gravity.

Gould would play under these circumstances for these two congenial spirits, with a passion and feeling that would seem to make the rude log room blossom with emotion and give to the rough surroundings a spiritual significance unrecognized and unsuspected save by the devotees of the heavenly art.

When the music ceased Dolly said:

"I suppose you must come back to earth and go to work. I thank you so much. Lo, the king snores!" and she pointed to her father, lost in sleep.

When Gould went Dolly followed him to the door of the draughting room, and said:

"Mr. Gould, I have some New York friends coming here in about two months, all very nice people, but I want to warn you against the wiles of Miss Lucia Van Allen. She is a perfect heart-breaker, very beautiful, very proud, very rich. She has had more men at her feet than any woman in New York. Some of them I have really pitied. I should feel bad to see our Mr. Gould suffer. Lucia is not to blame. She can't help it. Promise

me that you will keep heart free. Will you? I am very young, I know, but I am very wise. Do you promise?"

"Certainly, I think I can safely do so, having your good father, together with your wise self, to guard me. By the way, I shall begin on the plans for your little log village to-night, to comprise a large assembly room connected with a dining-room and five little private log houses for sleeping apartments."

"O, won't that be jolly! How soon can you have them ready?"

"In thirty to forty days."

"Just the right time to receive my friends. I trust you will do everything. Have one of the houses set over the water so that I can lie in bed and fish through the floor. That will make the other girls just green with envy!"

And the light-hearted girl, on whose head the sunshine of seventeen summers rested, sped out of the bungalow towards the hotel; leaving her father snoring blissfully in his chair.

The mail that day brought Gould a letter from Sharpe.

"DEAR GOULD:—It appears that your father did not formally disinherit you. His will made no mention of you. His widow can scarcely be said to be inconsolable. Strange to say, she has requested me to take charge of her affairs, professionally. She has done more. She wants to place in your possession every dollar of the property left her by her late husband, except enough to maintain her in moderate comfort. She has conducted herself with dignity since your father's death. In an interview she said to me: 'I have wronged the son of my late husband. As far as it lies in my power I want to make amends to him. I drove him from his father's house and favor. I did more: I drove him from my presence with cruel and unjust words. Through me, not knowingly, he was denied his inheritance. I must in some way possess him of what is rightfully his. Will you help me?' I replied that I did not think you expected or would accept any part of your father's estate, much less that which had been left to her; that I knew that you bore her no ill-will, but believed that it was her words that had shown you the folly of the life you were leading; that you were now happy and prosperous, and could not be induced to return to the old life. The interview ended, but remarkable as it may appear to you, I am learning to respect this woman.

"A few more things that may interest you: Your brother Wallace is a hopeless drunkard, and is going

straight to the ‘bow-wows.’ Mrs. Major Crosby returns to America on the next steamer, leaving Miss Lois in Paris with her relatives. This you may know, but probably you do not know that this comely American girl, fresh from the woods, has made a sensation in Paris. ‘She is something new, fresh, natural, unique,’ as one of the society papers puts it. There is a rumor that a certain Count Mowbray—poor fool—has fallen ‘many fathoms deep’ in love with her. God pity him! She is to come home in the spring, probably spoiled. As we found her in her home nest among the pines she was the rarest specimen of a woman I ever met. What a pity that she could not have been tethered there!

“Twenty-one schoolhouses finished in Maine; twenty more building. A thousand or more little Yankees comfortable and happy within their walls, and as many adults mystified and perturbed, wondering in their curious way who the fool is that is building them; while the fool himself is having mountains of satisfaction as he sees ‘in his mind’s eye’ that group around the Squire’s fireside, and other similar groups, surmising, conjecturing, guessing, piling divination on hypothesis, supposition on theory, and notion on surmise, to the end of the chapter. The picture abounds with the serio-comic. It never fails to delight me.

“I sent the Major \$500 for his services. He returned the draft, and sent a bill for expenses and one dollar

a day for the time that he worked, amounting in all to \$175. He must have carried his dinner, or camped out. I am planning my revenge. The little Château I am building at Sunny Point, on the Major's land, I shall present to him with my compliments when it is finished, which I hope will be in time for him to receive the possible Countess Mowbray. I think I could have forgiven you, Jay, if you had fallen in love with that scion of the de Neumoirs. Just imagine the Major's astonishment when he gets a deed of Château de Neumoirs! I will come down some time, if you'll urge me just a little. Yours,

SHARPE.

"P. S. We are working on the Maine statesmen. If they should become as wise and eloquent in matters that concern their own State as they are in matters that concern the nation, there may be a Katahdin reservation of a million acres, guarded and cared for by the United States."

Gould was aware of a feeling of great depression after reading Sharpe's letter. The words "Countess Mowbray," seemed stamped upon his mind. He could see them. Would she not grace the title? But did she not love him? Had she not revealed her secret that night at Joey's bedside? Why should he think

of her? The answer came to him, "Because you love her, and like a selfish coward you allowed her to go into the world without a look of love, a pressure of the hand, a sign of any kind. Now you have lost her! She will meet with nobler men who will be wise enough to appreciate her charms and faultless womanhood."

"How blind I have been," he thought. "Had I but spoken one word on that night, when our hearts were made tender by a common grief, our fate might have been changed. I know now that I loved her from the hour I first heard her sweet voice saying, 'Are you sick, sir? Can I help you?' and again the same voice with sorrow and agony in it, 'Oh! uncle, uncle! You have killed him! You have killed him!'"

The thought that she once loved him gave him hope. Could such a woman love again in a few short months, even a count? Her mother had loved a man whose worldly prospects were not brilliant, and had followed him through all the trials that had beset their path

with unfaltering devotion. The father's heart he knew to be a mine of purest affection.

This thought comforted him. He would wait and hope. But should they meet again, and he discover that she had remained constant to her unspoken love, he would atone for his cold neglect.

"Gould," said a voice, which he knew to be that of his chief, "I want to speak to you on a very confidential matter."

"What is it, Mr. Hooven? I assure you your confidence shall be held sacred."

"Gould, there is a matter that troubles me. I am afraid that my Dolly is gradually learning to think very much of your secretary, Mr. Crosby. They have been much together, and he is calculated to attract any young girl. I have noted with surprise his quiet manners, his ease and grace, his manly beauty, and a certain indefinite magnetism which leads all men, as well as women, to become his friends and believe in him. I am not one of those proud old fools who think that wealth is everything, and character nothing. But my Dolly's hap-

piness is all I am living for, since her mother's death, and for her to make an unfortunate alliance would break my heart. You must know all about this man Crosby; his character, his parentage, the trend of his mind, and what they presage."

"Mr. Hooven, your question is a serious one. I will answer you in part in the words of Miranda when she looked upon Prince Ferdinand. She saw in Ferdinand, with the pre-scence of a woman's soul, what your daughter sees in Mr. Crosby:

"There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple;
If the ill spirit have so fair a house,
Good things will strive to dwell with't.'

"My own convictions are these: Albert Crosby possesses many manly attributes. He is a pure-souled, honorable man. He comes from good stock on both sides of his house. He is a man of unusual promise, and my trust in him is unlimited."

The father grasped the hand of Gould, saying, "You have lifted a burden from my

heart. Wise little Dolly! She saw Crosby's 'visage in his mind,' as did Desdemona."

Gould was alone again, and his thoughts went back to Lois and to Sunny Point, the place which his heart called home. Lois was not there, but he would drive over to Falling Water the following Saturday. He went, and once more sat with the group around the Squire's hearthstone, heard again the quaint conceits of Jake and John, Bige and Lige; and night found him sitting with the Major by the cheerful fire of that home to which less than three years ago he had come as a wanderer.

The Major was looking forward with joy to the arrival of his wife. He explained to Gould the progress of that work he and the Squire were doing, the amusing efforts of the people of the various towns to find out who their benefactor was. Nothing had transpired, and it still remained a secret.

Dolly's log settlement was all finished when her friends arrived from New York. Miss Lucia Van Allen pronounced the whole

thing "rudely charming," quite to her taste, and beyond her expectations. Dolly had promptly dubbed the place "Little Millinocket," and her friends as the "pilgrims." There were six of these "pilgrims," including Miss Lucia Van Allen, Russell Van Allen, who was short, fat, full of fun, good-natured, and democratic. He loved his beautiful sister, but delighted in tormenting her, and would call her "Sis" to her great chagrin. The more she scolded, the more he persisted in it, until she gave it up as hopeless. Augustus Ferguson, —whom Russell had dubbed "A. F."—who was the reputed fiancé of the stately Lucia. He was a young man of fine appearance, but with a hauteur that was entirely lost on the plain people of that community. Sarah Jones was another of the sextette; a counterfeit presentment of "our Dolly," at least in character and spirit. Her hair was raven black, her eyes black and sparkling, her cheeks the "roses' hue," and her teeth a double bank of white pearls. Whenever she laughed, talked, or cried, they were in evidence; and when she and

her friend Dolly graced the streets of the little city they were the sunshine, not of "Paradise Alley," but of woodsy Millinocket.

There was Lucia's maid, Cynthia Small, quite forty years of age, who was supposed to act as chaperon as well as maid. She affected something of her mistress' manners.

Lettie Goddard was slender and pale. Her eyes were brilliant and large, her expression intense but spiritual, while on her cheeks glowed the sinister flag of the consumptive. At first the observer would think her very plain, but when she sat at the piano and the inspiration of music lit up her face there was something of the angel in it. She was a musician that heaven had endowed, and the great room became a chamber of harmonies whenever she played.

CHAPTER XX

GOULD was away on a northern trip attending to business for the corporation when the "pilgrims" arrived. Albert and Henri kept his house. Henri at once became a favorite with all at "Millinocket Junior," as the indolent Russell had named it. The women of the party made constant demands upon his time, and every evening they had a hop in "Cedar Hall," as the dining-room was called. Miss Goddard would accompany him as best she could through the wild reels, waltzes, polkas and mazourkas which he improvised from many quaint French airs.

"De violon," he would say, "spik wid me lak she diable. Mak de lady and de man hop —one, two, three; mak 'em laf—so——," and he would smile all over his face.

"Mons. Gould sometime he come und tak

dat violon. Ah! violon he change. Diable? Non! Le beau ange, he come; ze grande organ, she come; ze wet tear, she come. Everybody ver' happy—mos' awfu' happy. Everybody he cry, mos' awfu' cry. Henri feel he no good, want break violon his head top. Zee Mademoiselle Goddard sure enough never hear le Mons. Gould play on dat violon? Mon Dieu! He mak you happy; ze tear go down outside, one, two, three. Poor Henri, he seek. No play more when he hear le Monsieur."

Henri had worked up a great curiosity among the "pilgrims," and a desire to see this wonderful Gould, and to hear him play. Dolly had corroborated all that Henri had said. But the piquant *patois* of the little Frenchman had advertised Gould in advance of his arrival, and given an anticipatory relish more than columns in newspapers could have done, or hours of choice speech. When it was announced at Cedar Hall by Russell that Gould had arrived—and he could prove it, because he had pulled him out of a bark vat into which he had fallen, with a white flannel

suit on, coming out with a handsome brownish red—there was quite a commotion at the table. All evinced more or less delight, except Miss Lucia and the reticent Ferguson.

Miss Lucia said: "I am quite prepared to dislike this too-perfect Gould. I have heard nothing from Dolly and others but gushing eulogies on this man Gould. I really can't understand how one who is just a common superintendent of papermills and lumber yards can be of so much account. He may be useful and all that, quite handy round, you know, but hardly one of us."

"Oh, Lucia," cried Dolly, "you do an injustice to Mr. Gould. He's a real gentleman. He can do anything, father says. He planned these houses and all the mills."

"Oh, I dare say," spoke up Ferguson, "that he also planned the horse hovel made of logs, back here in the woods; and all that sort of thing, doncher know."

"I say, Sis," broke in Russell, "you and A. F. better go and soak yourselves in bark juice same as I did, and when you come out

you'll have a little sense. I never saw this manager until he pulled me out of that hemlock vat, but I want to tell you he'd just beat clear out of his boots—excuse my elegant figure of speech, Sis—that fellow that used to pose for an 'Adonis.' He's got a face like a Greek god, and if I'm not greatly mistaken my proud sister will have the heartache before a week; eh, Dolly?"

"Now I know I shall hate him," said Lucia. "He thinks that every woman he meets is sure to fall in love with him; but I will show him that there is one woman who will not. Dolly, I don't care to be introduced to this man. His very name has become hateful to me."

"I quite agree with you, Miss Van Allen," chimed in Ferguson.

"You must have eaten of the insane root, both of you," broke in Russell. "I wager my Boston bull, Grover C, that before you leave Millinocket you'll change your minds and be as eager to do this man justice, just plain everyday justice, as you are now to discredit him."

This was said with considerable asperity, and when he had finished Dolly clapped her hands, crying out: "You are just splendid, Russell Van Allen! If you were my sweetheart or my brother I would kiss you."

"Don't you dare do it, Dolly; but I would rather than seven dollars you would. As for being your sweetheart, I have loved you and Sarah and four other girls for more than three years and some months with a passion that is consuming me."

The subject was changed. A canoe ride was planned for the next day, a visit to the great paper mills the day following, and a picnic in the woods early the following week.

A basket of wild flowers had been sent in, a dozen of the latest magazines, together with *Puck*, *Judge*, *Truth*, and a beautiful bouquet of cut flowers marked "Dolly," but with no name attached. The dear girl knew who sent the flowers, for "Albert" was on every leaf and petal.

The morning following the evening on which Gould had played at Cedar Hall, and,



“ Dolly could not conceal her joy at having her graceful lover
near her ”

as Russell had said, "Sis" had taken her second degree, a picnic had been arranged. Superintendent Gould had sent over the company's steam launch, in charge of Albert Crosby and Gramme. Dolly and all her friends, including quite a number of people who were stopping at the hotel, were to have a New England dinner on the farther shore, ten miles away. Dolly could not conceal her joy at having her graceful lover near her. Russell was at his best. His eyes shone with a bold roguishness peculiar to them when he saw "fun ahead." He "bossed" everybody, but with perfect inoffensiveness.

As he stood on the little dock and looked across the shining waters to the still woods beyond, his boyish spirits rose high, and he raised his voice in three prolonged whoops, which he said meant, when translated into the original Penobscot, "We thank thee, O thou great copper-colored Spirit of the North, for the privilege of using your woods, your sunshine, and your waters this day."

"Perhaps you don't think I meant that,

Sarah," he continued, half seriously, "but I really do. I never thought of being thankful to anyone for brick houses or stone fronts, automobiles or steam yachts, for money can buy them; but money can't buy this. Here is liquid air for you, and yonder is something grander than the forest of Arden."

He was interrupted in his rhapsody by his sister, who came running down looking troubled. He met her and said in a low voice: "Where's Gus?"

"Mr. Ferguson," she replied stiffly, "will not picnic with us to-day. He's been quite unendurable this morning. He had the effrontery to tell me that my conduct last night did not please him. I suppose he had reference to my shaking hands with Mr. Gould. I informed him I would try to survive his displeasure, adding there was but one thing that would mar the happy prospects of the day, and that was that Mr. Gould could not be with us. He fairly glared at me, and he looked absolutely savage as he said: 'I have a matter to settle with Mr. Gould, and will take advantage of your ab-

sence to do so.' There he goes now, towards Mr. Gould's bungalow. I wonder if he will have the temerity to insult a man who is doing so much for us. Russell, hadn't you better follow him?"

There was a troubled expression in her eyes, for she knew that the rage that possessed her lover grew out of his love for her—a love which she had encouraged, and might have returned in time, had not this inordinate jealousy made it difficult to do so."

"You go and tell Mr. Crosby," said her brother, "to take the launch over to the point of rocks where you took your 'first degree,' and wait for me. I don't like the looks of things." And he moved swiftly towards the bungalow. As he entered the door into the main room, he heard Ferguson say:

"Oh! you can equivocate, but you won't fight. I have asked you for the satisfaction of a gentleman."

Then he heard Gould's calm reply:

"You have asked for the satisfaction of a brute, of a prize fighter, Mr. Ferguson. If

my conduct does not please you, you can easily pass out of my presence and beyond the limit of my influence."

The calm, steady voice of Gould maddened Ferguson, who hissed out:

"If I can't insult you with words, possibly this way——" and he struck Gould sharply across the face.

In another moment Ferguson lay prostrate upon the floor. Gould had struck the infuriated man a harder blow than he realized. When Ferguson went down his head came violently in contact with one of the lower logs forming the building.

The affair had taken place just as Russell had rushed in to interfere. In a moment he was at the side of his prostrate friend. He saw at once that Ferguson was stunned, not hurt, for he soon looked about in a dazed manner, and finally said:

"I say, what's happened?"

"Why, you damn fool," replied the excited Russell, "you've gone and taken the 'third degree,' and skipped the second. It's mighty

bad form, old fellow, and you will find it so. Get up and sit in that chair and let me talk to you."

With the assistance of Gould they placed him in one of the chairs. Gould then went into the draughting room.

Ferguson did not seem to be quite in possession of himself. He rubbed his eyes and head, and looked about without any apparent knowledge of where he was, or of what had happened. There was a red spot on the side of his jaw where he had received the blow. This he would unconsciously rub with his hand, still looking around.

"Our Russell" stepped back a few feet, and opened upon him after this fashion:

"Of all the consummate asses that ever I met, when he starts in to be one, commend me to one Augustus Ferguson of New York City. Do you hear me, Gus?"

His friend rolled his eyes and looked at him, but said nothing.

Russell continued: "A few minutes ago there were twenty-five happy people about to

start out for a day of pleasure. There did not seem to be a cloud in the sky. The day was full of promise. But among them was one jealous fool. They had not reckoned upon the capacity of such an idiot to upset the plans and ruin the prospects of the rest of the party. Gus, the fool, was there, and he had the capacity to do the mischief. You were the fool, and you have done the mischief. Now, let me tell you something more: You will never become a member of the Van Allen family with my consent. You are not fit to be a valet for a pig-sticker. You've disgraced us all, and insulted the man who was doing all he could to befriend us, including that chump, Ferguson. I am tired of your vain and pompous ways, of your swelling port, your affected silence, of your walking stick and your monocle. They are all out of place up here in these free woods. They don't belong here. Gus, there is a man under your clothes somewhere, but I haven't seen him since you came here. You've disgusted Sis, and everybody else. The best thing you can do is to pack up

and get out of here, unless you can find that Gus Ferguson whom I used to know in our college days. You have made a deuced mess of it. I don't want to be hard on you, old fellow, but of the two things, do one or the other. Take away the ass we have had around here the last week, or bring out the dear old Fergy I used to know."

There was something so tender and kindly in the last words of Russell, that the resentment caused by the hot words of his friend began to melt, and at the words "the dear old Fergy I used to know," uttered with all the force of camaraderie, Ferguson suddenly put out both his hands, saying:

"Forgive me, dear old Russ. I deserve all you have said, but I was insane with jealousy. I didn't know what I was about. I want to stay long enough to prove that I can be a gentleman; then I'll go."

At this moment Gould, who had heard all, entered and to the astonishment of both men said:

"Mr. Van Allen, you go to the yacht and

start across the lake with your party. They are waiting for you. Mr. Ferguson and I will follow in my canoe. I have understood that he wanted to be instructed in paddling and managing one. This will be a good opportunity to learn, and I will account for his absence. Will it not suit you to do this, Mr. Ferguson?"

"It will not only suit me, Mr. Gould, but it will get me out of a very awkward predicament. I see my folly, and I understand how delicate, how thoughtful, how generous, you are. Your simplicity is too profound for my understanding."

"It's all right, Fergy," said "our Russ." "You are taking your second degree now, same as Sis did. You were a little premature on the third; but never mind, old boy. Now, brace up, and I'll have everything fixed up when you get there. I'll tell Sis that Fergy is himself again."

They shook hands, both with tears in their eyes, and "our Russ" went forth a happy boy, leaving the two men alone.

As soon as "our Russ" had left the bunga-

low, Ferguson said: "Mr. Gould, I don't understand you. Have you no feelings of resentment?"

"Not any, Mr. Ferguson."

"You will pardon me if I ask what is your philosophy?"

"I assure you it is quite simple. I could not help overhearing your friend's concluding remarks, and they confirmed what I had already suspected, namely, that as a man you are an excellent instrument, but somewhat out of tune. My violin, *out of tune*, distresses me."

"I see! I see!" broke in Ferguson. "And when it is out of tune, you tune it as you—as you tuned me."

"Do not embarrass yourself with such a personal application. Let us go. You will be a good canoeist before the sun sets. You take the stern and I will take the bow. You will learn instinctively how to guide the canoe. I will instruct a little as we move along."

"Allow me another word. Have you any idea, sir, how profound a lesson you have taught in the simile drawn from the violin,

namely, that where there is harmony there is happiness—music?"

"You have expressed the idea perfectly. I thank you."

"One more question, and I will relieve your patience: Were you ever in love? Were you ever jealous?"

Gould looked out over the water a moment before answering, then replied:

"I am in love, and I fear I am jealous."

"That's just what I thought," said Ferguson eagerly. "I don't blame you for loving Lucia. You couldn't help it; nobody can. And of course—you—you—I appeared to be in the way."

"Not at all. The woman I love is in France, and I fear my love is hopeless, for my rival, I understand, is a French count, wealthy and of excellent character. It is scarcely probable that so humble a man as myself can hope to bear off the prize. I tell you these things that you may fully understand why I sympathize with you and bear no resentment. Please consider this confidential."

"Mr. Gould, my hope is that I may live to win your respect. I shall prize it next to Lucia's love."

The two men arrived at the picnic grounds in time for the dinner under the great trees near the shore. It was a veritable New England dinner, consisting of brown bread, beans from the "bean hole," roast chicken, dough-nuts, baked apples, pumpkin pie, coffee, etc. Lucia insisted upon sitting between Gould and her lover. The latter surprised and delighted them all with his cheerful spirits and geniality. After dinner Gould took his departure, and paddled to another part of the lake where he had men at work, leaving the party to return at their pleasure.

There was a dance at Cedar Hall that night, Henri and Lettie Goddard furnishing the music. About ten o'clock Albert Crosby came over to the bungalow with a letter from his father, which he said his father desired that Gould should read. Albert seemed considerably cast down. "After you hear this I want you to write to father and give him your opin-

ion. My opinion could be expressed in one word, ‘No.’”

Among other things the letter said: “I have received a formal proposal from Count de Mowbray for the hand of Lois. I understand that it is the custom among the upper classes in this country for the would-be husband to declare his wish and purpose to the parents of the favored one before proposing to her, although his attentions may be so marked that there can be no doubt of his purpose. I am well informed as to the character and standing of the count. It is *par excellence*. Our grounds of opposition to such a marriage are that it seems unnatural, almost cruel, for it takes from us our daughter, practically forever, and this thought fills us with sorrow. But we will not consider ourselves if we are assured that our Lois loves the count and he is necessary to her happiness. She has scarcely mentioned him in her letters, and we are at a loss to know what her real feelings are. If she does not love him, his title and wealth would count for nothing with us, How shall I

answer him, Albert, under these circumstances? Read this to Gould. He knows something of society's customs, I am sure. Ask him to advise me."

When Albert had finished reading the letter, he said to Gould with some vehemence:

"I know what I shall write father. It will be this: 'Write to Lois, "If you love the count and can't be happy without him, marry him. If you do not, come home at once, where we will make up with our love for the loss of title and wealth.''"

"That's clear and incisive, Albert. I will write to your father this night. Was the picnic a success?"

"A great success. But what did you do to that man Ferguson? He seems entirely made over. Why, he is a jolly good fellow. But I must go back to Cedar Hall. They will probably keep up the dancing until twelve o'clock. Good-night."

Gould went to his desk and bowed his face in his hands. What should he write to Major Crosby? His love for Lois had grown and

strengthened every day since her departure until it had become a part of his life. He saw her in everything, and in his mind he could feel her soft lips upon his brow and the gentle touch of her hand upon his. The liquid sweetness of her eyes was ever before him. Must he give her up? Was there no hope? Yes, a faint hope. She had confessed to no love for her titled lover, and he felt sure that her hand would not go unaccompanied by her heart. This hope remained with him when he wrote the following lines to Major Crosby:

“**MY DEAR MAJOR:**

“Albert has read your letter to me, in which you request my advice as to what would be a proper reply to Count de Mowbray to his proposal for the hand of your daughter, Lois, in marriage. I cannot advise you in this matter, and my excuse must be this confession. I love your Lois, and therefore am incapable of giving wise counsel. I know you will understand. Yours in confidence,

JAY GOULD.”

CHAPTER XXI

DURING the following week the guests at Cedar Hall had a continual round of pleasure. They visited the great pulp and paper mills, Albert acting as guide. There were more picnics and much canoeing. Ferguson had gained many friends, and re-established himself in the good graces of Lucia.

Gould had been away on important business for the company, but he had arranged everything for the comfort and entertainment of Dolly's guests.

President Hooven, with several of the directors, was expected the last of the week, and Gould was to meet them in council.

Dolly, with her friend Sarah, came down to the bungalow as soon as she heard of the arrival of Gould, and informed him that she was going to test his friendship by asking that he

take her father and Russ into his bungalow for a few days, as they were to have two new guests, and "one of these guests," she said, with a roguish look in her eye, "I have selected for your wife. She is everything that a man could ask for: young, beautiful, rich, and a widow. Widows, you know, are said to be much more attractive to young men than are girls. I shall not warn you against her charms, but shall do everything I can to become a match-maker. You are sure to win, especially if you play your violin as you did that never-to-be-forgotten night that Lucia took her 'second degree,' as Russ says. But you must shave off that ugly beard! Another thing: there is to be a great ball game next Monday between the U. of M. and the Millinuckets. You are to be umpire. Russ and Mr. Ferguson are to play with the Millinuckets, and Albert Crosby," she said, blushing, "is to play, if you can spare him. He told me that he did not think he should ask you to let him off, as he has been away so much since I—I mean since my company came. But I am going to ask you

to let him go just this time, and we'll never ask again, will we, Sarah?"

"Not until the next time," said Sarah.

"I am afraid I can't resist you two girls. Mr. Crosby is too good a ball player to take out of our club, and if I am going to be umpire I want him to play. Ball playing is the only recreation I indulge in. I must ask you to excuse me now, for I am going across the lake in my canoe to look after matters there. Oh, I nearly forgot. Send all the men here you wish. I can make room for them. Glad to have them. Now run away."

Gould was about to enter his canoe when he was saluted by a voice saying:

"How are you, old man? It's just good for the eyes to see you."

He turned to greet the irrepressible Link Lincoln. Gould could not help liking this frank, open-hearted and genial drummer. All his faults and weaknesses he "wore on his sleeve." He had no vulgar vices, and in his way was companionable and agreeable. Gould shook hands with him cordially, saying:

"I am going across the lake to the new camp. Do you want to go with me?"

"Well, you are just shouting. Got another paddle?"

"Yes, in the canoe."

"I feel like paddling. I can make her jump right out of the water. I need something to warm me up. I had a chill just now."

"A chill?" said Gould, looking puzzled. "How can that be? It is seventy-five in the shade."

"It may be here, but it's forty below up at that new bungalow marked Cedar Hall."

"You interest me. Explain."

"Well, you see, I was swinging along, and chancing to look up I saw sitting on the porch two of the prettiest girls I ever saw. They were chatting and laughing, and having the biggest sort of a time. You know perhaps that I am all out of girls, and it occurred to me that I might make a 'ten strike' right here. So I walked up to the steps, thinking I would introduce myself by inquiring if you were at the office. When I reached the porch

those two little girl sparrows hushed up, looked at me with their gazelle eyes for a moment, then ran into the house. I had gone too far to back out, so I stepped onto the porch. Just then there rose up another girl I had not seen. Well, now, talk about the Queen of Sheba, Diana, Greek goddesses and marble Venuses, they ain't in it a minute with that woman. I calculate I've got a pretty good nerve but she just made me feel as though someone was pulling a barbed wire through my vertebra. I was as limp as a drowned angle worm. She never spoke, but looked at me as though some ill wind had blowed me in and she couldn't account for the species. I murmured something about making a mistake and hurried away. As I did so I heard the two pretty little sparrows giggling derisively. It was a terrible experience for me. I am wondering who that tall iceberg can be. Next to Lois Crosby she is the handsomest woman I ever saw. But my, my, what a difference! After I have left town, if you should meet her and she has thawed out, you might present my com-

pliments—if you dare to—and say to her that I think that as a fine figurehead upon the north pole she would be a success. Now, let her go!"

They glided out upon the bright waters of the lake, Gould laughing heartily at the conceits of his merry friend.

"When were you at Falling Water?" inquired Gould.

"Yesterday."

"Are they all well?"

"Yes, well and mighty happy, for you know the Major's wife has got home."

"I knew she was expected."

"Yes, she's come, and is togged out gorgeous. She brought Madeline a lot of new dresses right from Paris. Things are looking up over at Sunny Point. The whole town is excited, and as proud as a peacock with an extra dazzler on its tail feathers. Of course you have heard of the news about Lois's engagement to 'Count de Bombay,' as Abby Smart says. They say it's a dead sure thing, and that they are building the 'Scateau de

Neumoirs,' as our Abby has it, for the bride and bridegroom. Some like the idea and some don't. I think Mrs. Crosby rather favors it, but the Major's in the dumps. Lige is tickled to death, but the Squire shakes his head gloomily when the boys talk about it in the store. The papers are all talking about Falling Water, and it is becoming famous. I sometimes wonder, Gould, why you didn't freeze on to Lois. It may have been a fool idea of mine, but I thought she rather liked you. I saw something in her eyes when she was looking your way that would have made me dizzy if any girl looked at me the same way. You must be one of those fellows with a marble heart. Only wish I had one. It would save me a heap of trouble. By the way, Gould, Bige and Abby are going to be married."

"No! When?"

"As soon as the count and countess arrive from Paris. Abby thinks it would be more becoming on their part to wait till after their wedding."

"How did it happen? They tell me they

have been keeping company forty years, and everyone despaired of their ever being married."

"It is the funniest thing you ever heard of," replied Lincoln, laughing gleefully. "You see, Bige's dog, Gulliver, who was nearly twenty years old, and Abby's cat, Roxanna, who was about the same age, never could get along together, but fought every time they met. Bige wouldn't give up Gulliver, nor Abby Roxanna, and this kept them apart. About a month ago the dog and cat had a terrible row. Roxanna crawled home with a broken back, and Gulliver with one eye hanging out. Usually such a thing would make their owners enemies; but Abby and Bige wept over the one common grave of their aged pets. They even put up a wooden headstone, and called on me to help them with an epitaph. Here is the way it goes:

"Here lie Gulliver and Roxanna.
Through all their life they lived in strife,
But now they sleep in peace that's dense.
Death brought with it sound common sense
To Gulliver and Roxanna."

"How do you like it, Gould?"

"It is very suggestive and teaches a lesson. What part of the epitaph did Abby and Bige compose?"

"They furnished Gulliver and Roxanna. I am to blame for the rest. Don't you like it?"

"Oh, yes; it will do very well for a dog and a cat. But here we are. I am very much obliged for your company. You are my Winged Mercury. Will you have your samples open to-night? I shall need some hardware very soon."

"I shall be mighty glad to sell you. Somehow you are the one man I can't drum. I wait till you say you want things."

"And that is one reason why I buy of my friend Lincoln. He doesn't drum me. There is a fishing outfit in the canoe, and you can amuse yourself while I am away."

That night the genial Lincoln left town, made happy by an order from Gould which he said was a "Lu-lu."

An hour was spent that night by the Millinocket nine in preparing for the great event of

the coming week. Twice in the past had the U. of M. borne off the prize from the Millinocketts; but with the added strength of Ferguson and "our Russ," they were full of hope, for it was plain to see that the two men were "past masters" of the great national game of baseball.

Saturday was pay day. President Hooven had brought currency to pay the men. A greater part of this was placed in the bank for safe-keeping. It was Gould's intention to rise early Saturday morning and, in company with the president, cross to the camps, and pay the men employed there, in order to save them the trouble of going to the town office. A thousand dollars was kept out for this purpose and the president brought it with him to the bungalow.

Gould had had a letter from Squire Gray the day before, and the Squire stated that he was quite sure he had seen Pinto in Falling Water that day. "He is the man, you will remember, who tried to rob and murder Mr. Newcomb, the peddler." Newcomb had

recognized him and pointed him out to the Squire. "There were two other men with him, both wearing beards, but Pinto was smooth shaven. While he is much older, yet there is the same cold, vindictive look about him. His hair is almost white, his eyes are black and restless and quite small; his lips are thin and tremulous. I write these particulars because on Thursday the three men started up the river, and it is thought they are making for Millinocket. You had better 'keep your eye out' and notify the authorities. I have no doubt they are planning some robbery or murder. They look capable of it."

It had been Gould's intention to notify the mayor and police to be on the lookout, but he had been so engaged with his own affairs that he had forgotten to do so. He had worked hard on Friday, and had practiced very late with the ball team. He was exceedingly tired. He had given up his own room to Mr. Hooven. Henri was asleep in the kitchen, and Russ occupied the spare room which led off from the main room, near the back door opening on

the rear porch. Just before Hooven retired he handed Gould the large pocketbook containing the money, saying, "You had better take care of this, for there are some people who if they knew that we had so much money here might call around in the night after it. I have heard of such things. Have you any pistols?"

"Two. We never think of such a thing as robbers here, but are always prepared for callers of that sort. Roosevelt's idea, you see."

Gould took the pocketbook, went to the large wood-box, lifted the cover, took out the wood, put the pocketbook on the bottom, placed the wood over it, shut down the cover, and laid the poker and tongs upon it.

"They can't get it without making a noise that will wake us all up. They will have to reckon with us before they can get away with it. But I have no idea that such a precaution is necessary." Then it suddenly occurred to him what Squire Gray had written in his letter about the three men; but he said nothing to the president. As he left the room for his own he said:

"I advise that you leave your room doors open. The rooms are rather small, and you will need air."

As he was preparing for bed, he realized that he was rather nervous. It was not a fear, but a premonitory sensation, which he tried to shake off.

"What a fool I am to feel this way! I'll not think about that letter. I am becoming a boy. I did not know that I had such things as nerves."

Nevertheless, when he had lain down he placed the loaded revolvers within easy reach, and noted well where the baseball bat stood in the corner. He even went so far as to go out to the fireplace in the main room and lay papers and matches near the wood, which Henri always had ready for lighting. He noted also that both bedroom doors stood open, and that the lights were extinguished. Then he went back to his room and tried to sleep. He was very tired, but he could not throw off the sense of impending danger. Once he thought he could hear footsteps outside the bungalow. He

slipped on his bed shoes and went to the window and looked out. Nothing could be seen. He scolded himself again, and lay down, determined to sleep. After a while he dozed off into a restless slumber.

CHAPTER XXII

HOW long he slept he never knew, but he awoke alarmed. Every sentiment of sleep had left him. He listened. Yes, he could hear stifled groans and low, murmuring voices. What could it mean! He quickly donned a few clothes, slipped his feet into the bed shoes, placed one revolver in his hip pocket, reached for the bat, and, stooping very low, moved silently to the door. There was a faint light shining under the door of the president's room —the door was closed.

In an instant all fear fled. Gould's blood was up. "I will quietly waken Russ," he thought. He moved silently to the left, passed the fireplace, and found Russ's door closed. The groans continued to issue from the president's room. He must work quickly! If the three men were in the room he would need

Russ's help to capture them. The door of Russ's room yielded to his pressure. He moved to the bed, and at once detected the smell of chloroform. He knew what had happened. Russ lay bound hand and foot. He had recovered from the slight effects of the chloroform, but did not speak, for he thought one of the robbers had come back to see if he was still unconscious, which he was affecting to be.

Gould whispered: "*If you are conscious, don't speak. It is Gould.*"

"Thank God," whispered Russ.

With his clasp knife Gould noiselessly cut the cords that bound Russ, then sliding his arm under his friend's body, lifted him from the bed, and stood him on his feet without the slightest noise.

"Get your breath," he whispered. "Here's a revolver. Are you all right?"

"Wait a moment," replied Russ. "I am coming round. I fooled them about the chloroform. I blew off the handkerchief as soon as they left."

"Listen!" said Gould. "This is my

plan. We will creep to the door of Mr. Hooven's room. I think they are trying to force from him a confession of where the money is. We will open the door quickly; cover them with our revolvers. If they rush on us, shoot. If they surrender, spare them. You take this club in your left hand. I will open the door and be ready. How is your courage?"

"If I don't get killed, I'll have some fun," said the nervy Russ.

Gould was satisfied that he had a man of courage to sustain him. As they approached the door, the voices grew urgent. They could distinctly hear:

"Tell us where the money is, or we will burn your foot."

Suddenly the door was flung open, and the astonished robbers, too surprised for a moment to think or act, found themselves looking into the barrels of the revolvers held in the hands of the determined men.

On the bed lay Hooven, bound and gagged. His feet were exposed, and one of the robbers

was holding a lighted candle to them. On the little stand burned another candle. At the head of the bed, with his white face and glinting eyes stood Pinto. A large, dark man was holding the feet of the sufferer. This was the situation when the door opened. But in an instant all changed.

"Blow out the lights!" cried Pinto.
"Fight!"

Quick as thought Gould saw the peril that lay in darkness. As Pinto whirled to extinguish the candle, he fired point blank at Gould. But before he could reach the candle, a ball from Gould's revolver crashed through his jaw, and he fell, with a groan, to the floor.

The ball from Pinto's revolver entered the upper part of our hero's shoulder, passing out and into the log wall. It was only a flesh wound.

Russell had not been idle. The man holding the candle was not armed. He attempted to rush out of the room, but the big bat came down on his head, and he fell in the doorway like one dead. Russell turned to find Gould

struggling with the big fellow. A knife could be seen gleaming in his hand. Gould had seized his wrist and held it as in a vice. His other arm was around the man's body holding down his arm.

Gould shouted to Russ:

"I've got him! Hold the candle to his hand until he drops the knife! Don't allow him to blow it out."

And now that great strength which Gould had acquired in his college days served him well. He slowly straightened the powerful arm of the ruffian, despite his resistance.

"Hold the candle to his fingers!"

One touch of the flame was enough. The knife fell to the floor.

"Pick it up, and cut the cords that bind Mr. Hooven. I can hold this fellow all night."

In another moment Hooven was released, but could not move or speak.

Just then Henri burst into the room crying:

"Ze helle go on here, bang, bang!"

"Quick, Henri, light the fire," cried Gould.

As he dragged the nearly vanquished robber through the door the fire blazed up, lighting the room. Then Gould, remembering one of his old side-hug tricks, let go the wrist, flung his arm back and around the neck of the man, and throwing his hips in front and summoning all his strength, he flung him over his head to the floor with terrible force. Taking no chances he sprang, seized him by the throat and called on Russ to bring the cords that had bound Hooven. As they were securing the man, Russell holding the light, there was a sharp report. The light was extinguished, and Russell's little finger hung by a shred of flesh. Then followed the sound of a crushing blow. They looked up to see Henri standing, with bat in hand, over Pinto, who, with the bones of his jaw protruding, his teeth exposed, the face bloody and disfigured, lay dead in the doorway. He had crawled to the door, and, summoning what strength he could, had endeavored to wreak his vengeance before his death, which he realized was close upon him. He was dead, although the excited and frightened Henri did

not know it. The man brought down by Russ was securely bound, and the battle was over.

Using the telephone, the alarm was soon given and help summoned. It was an hour before the doctors could revive Hooven.

The robbers had entered Russ's room first, and nearly smothered him with a pillow while they bound him. Then they held a handkerchief over his mouth, and he, realizing his helpless condition, simulated unconsciousness.

The robbers, satisfied that he was chloroformed, left him with the handkerchief over his face. For a short time he was insensible, but recovered sufficiently to realize what had happened and blew off the handkerchief about the time that Gould entered the room.

The villains had been led to think that Gould occupied the room that Russ was in. They probably knew that Henri slept on the bunk in the kitchen. They had entered Russ's room without a light and reckoned on there being but two men in the main bungalow.

In some way they had learned that the president had brought the money with him and

therefore he was the one they proposed to rob.

They had chloroformed him, Pinto holding the saturated cloth over his face while the other two men held him. After he had become insensible they searched for the money, but failing to find it, had waited for him to recover consciousness and then tried to force him by torture to reveal where it was.

The groans that Gould heard had proceeded from Hooven as he was coming out from the effects of the chloroform. They were preparing to torture him, after urging him in vain to inform them where the money was.

They had been led to think that he had sufficiently recovered to understand them, and were in the act of holding the candle to his feet when Gould and Russ burst into the room.

The next morning the town was terribly excited, and all that day the place was thronged with people curious to see the scene of the tragedy.

Gould got away early, going to the camps

across the lake with the money to pay his men. He said nothing to them about the occurrence at the bungalow. After paying them off he paddled to the east cove "pulled out" his canoe and disappeared in the woods. He wanted to be alone. He realized that he had received a terrible shock. A reaction had set in, and he was as weak as a child.

He did not appear until about four o'clock. He was very pale and complained of being tired, and of needing sleep.

He found the bungalow in perfect order, but no one was there but Henri, in whose face, though it wore its old smile, there was a look of great anxiety.

He looked into his master's face with all the affection in his gaze that one sees in the eyes of a loving dog, as he said apologetically:

"Henri feel mos' awfu' bad. He 'fraid M'sieu Gould he come back no mo' to poor Henri. Henri heart brok off ver queek M'sieu no come. Mon Dieu! Henri he slep vey poor las' night. Dat robbare with jaw all loos mak Henri dream mos' awfu' seek. Poor

diable, I crackee his hed. But ze man he go shoot. I try save M'sieu Gould. Henri do right? Oui, M'sieu?"

"You did nobly, Henri, and I shall never forget it," replied Gould with feeling.

The little Frenchman never knew that it was his arm that sent the wicked Pinto to his last account.

CHAPTER XXIII

OUR RUSS" was the hero of the town, and he thoroughly enjoyed it, but not more than his proud sister, who petted him, called him her brave brother, often putting her arms around his neck and giving him a sisterly kiss, much to the envy of Ferguson, who, while he liked Russ, regretted that he had not had the opportunity to prove himself a hero that Russ had.

It was found necessary to amputate Russ's injured finger. He declared his intention to pitch in the game, providing the club desired.

Early on Monday morning a tall figure was seen approaching the bungalow. As he passed Cedar Hall he raised his hat to someone on the porch.

Gould, who had kept his room on Sunday, was eating his breakfast when his attention was called by Henri to the approaching stranger, whose distinguished appearance had

impressed the boy. One look and Gould saw that it was Lionel Sharpe. He met him at the door, and they shook hands cordially, Sharpe saying:

"I chanced to be in Boston yesterday, and read in the papers an account of a little fracas you had here Friday night. You seem to attract robbers and their sort. Did it happen right here?"

"Right here. There is some of Pinto's blood on the floor. We are going to plane it off, as we cannot wash it off."

Sharpe looked at the dark spot curiously. After a while, he said:

"What brutes we all are! How easily the animal is summoned. I suppose I would pass for a man of some refinement and culture, but when I read about the bloody fight that took place here I was possessed with a fiendish desire to see where that man Pinto was killed. I had anticipated with pleasure visiting you a little later; but when I read the account of the bloody tragedy the desire became irresistible. So you see, Jay, the finest gentleman is but a

veneered brute masquerading in fine clothes." Turning to his friend, he continued, "You look pale and careworn. Were you hurt?"

"Oh, no, only a slight flesh wound. But I have not felt well for some time. I suppose it is the old story of anxiety and care. I will soon recover my usual health. Have you had breakfast?"

"No, I came through on the night train. As soon as I registered at the hotel I ran over here to see if you were safe. You see, you are such a chronic victim of robbers," he said smilingly. "I did not know but they might renew their visitation. By the way, here are some Paris papers which give an account of the social triumphs in that city, of the American beauty, Miss Lois Crosby, also of the anticipated alliance of the house of Mowbray with that of Crosby. I rather think it is a foregone conclusion, and that when we next see the fair Lois she will be Countess de Mowbray. I feel so sure of this that I am urging my contractor to rush the work at Sunny Point in order to have it ready for the bridal couple.

By the way, I have changed its name. Just by accident I learned that Major Crosby is so strongly American that he does not like the name château. He has not made his objections known to me as he has probably never dreamed that I am building it for him and his family as a small recognition of what he did for my friend Gould, and his unselfish work in the building of the schoolhouses. Mrs. Crosby will return from France a very rich woman. The estates and revenues she inherited have proven to be very productive. She will be able to maintain the place properly."

"What shall you call it?"

"The Lodge of Katahdin."

"Let me congratulate you," said Gould with feeling. "It is a grand and appropriate name. But come, let us have breakfast. Henri has re-garnished the table, which is on the porch. It is a little rude, but airy and pleasant out there. There are two great pine trees on each side, and you will hear them sigh and sough as we eat."

He opened the door and soon the two

friends, the millionaire and the manager, were breakfasting on lake trout caught that morning, baked beans hot from the "bean hole" (something entirely new to Sharpe), brown bread, coffee, doughnuts, cream of wheat, with an abundance of thick cream. The table was arranged with all the daintiness of Henri's faultless French taste. He had taken the cue from his master, and had done so well that Sharpe exclaimed, as he stepped to the porch:

"Jay, this is rapturous! You don't need sympathy. You are to be envied. Where is the artist who arranged this table? My boy, have you some fair 'Maineiac,' a domestic genius, about here? Ah, see that water, and those woods, and the great hovering pines so near! It does me good. Really, what excuse can you have for being sick? Why, a dyspeptic would get well here! What is the matter with you? You seem dull."

Gould laughed as he replied, "I am enjoying hearing you talk. In New York you were the dumb one. A five-word sentence was about all we could expect from you; but you

are really delightful here and chat away like a chipmunk. There are two of them now. They are Henri's pets. He calls them 'This and That.' Don't be surprised if they run all over you. They are mighty sociable little fellows, and as tame as kittens."

So the two friends chatted, Sharpe growing more and more enthusiastic as the meal proceeded. Everything suited him, particularly Henri, who had served them perfectly, but was awed into silence by the distinguished-looking stranger. At the close of the meal Sharpe said:

"Can't I stay here with you a couple of days? I will sleep on the floor or in the kitchen; anywhere excepting in that room where the president was assaulted."

"Why, my dear fellow, you must stay here. If you went to the hotel it would break me all up."

So it was arranged that Sharpe should remain in the bungalow.

The crowd began to arrive early. The U. of M. friends swarmed up from Bangor, Old-

town, Orono, and all towns on the B. & A. railroad. They came by hundreds. There never was such a crowd seen in the "City of the Woods." Fifty seats had been reserved in the center of the grand stand for Dolly and her friends, the president, directors, and the various heads of the corporation. On one of the seats sat President Hooven; at his side, Dolly's guest, was Mrs. Harmon, and on her left Lionel Sharpe. He had said nothing to Gould of Mrs. Harmon's presence in the town, thinking it wise not to do so until after the game, for he knew that, as umpire, his friend should have nothing to distract him, and if he knew that Marion Harmon was watching him it could not fail to divert his mind.

The hour had come. The men were in their places, and awaiting the command of the umpire to "Play ball!" The band had ceased playing. A hush had fallen upon the throng. But a few of that vast crowd had seen Gould, whose name had been upon every lip. The papers had rung with praises of his wonderful pluck and courage. His own townspeople

even had not seen him since that awful night at the bungalow, and they awaited with unconcealed impatience for the appearance of their hero. When he came forward his reception was one that surpasses description. The crowd went wild. Cheer after cheer, prolonged and loud, rent the air. "Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!" they shouted.

Gould turned toward the crowd and bowed his acknowledgments. Then there was a commotion on the grand stand. Mrs. Marshall Harmon had fainted in the arms of Lionel Sharpe. She was soon restored, and, as pale as death, watched the progress of the game. None save Lionel Sharpe suspected the cause of her sudden collapse.

President Hooven took upon himself to explain to the pale and silent woman at his side who the umpire was.

"He's the man who saved my life Friday night. There never was known a more remarkable case of pluck and courage. He took terrible chances when he, with only little Russ to help him, attacked those three desperate vil-



"President Hooven took upon himself to explain to the pale and silent woman at his side who the umpire was"

lains. I feel that I owe him what money cannot pay. To show my appreciation I am trying to have him made one of the directors. But there is one thing in the way—a director must own fifty thousand dollars' worth of stock. I have offered to advance the money on three years' time without interest, but he is so proud he won't accept the favor, and as he has only a few thousand dollars of his own I am hopelessly blocked."

"How much of the stock," inquired Mrs. Harmon, "did you say one must have to become eligible to the directorship?"

"Fifty thousand dollars."

"Tell me more about Mr. Gould."

"I could talk all day with him for a subject," replied Hooven. "But let me say in brief that he is the most wonderful all 'round man that the corporation ever had in its employ. He is an engineer, a surveyor, a draughtsman, a constructor, has wonderful control over his men; and can look ahead and foresee things. In fact, he is the whole thing. The meeting of the directors is merely per-

functory. He lays his recommendations before us and we vote ‘Yes.’ But we must watch the game.”

At another interval in the game Mrs. Harmon asked Hooven, “Is Mr. Gould married, or to be married?”

“Neither, I take it. His is a case of ‘the marble heart.’ I never saw a man so indifferent to women as he. He never goes into society, and lives by himself at the bungalow. Dolly, as you know, regards him as her elder brother, and she is the one girl who can get him out of his bungalow and up to Cedar Hall, where he, at times, will play the violin to Miss Goddard’s accompaniment. But my, my, Mrs. Harmon, can’t he play?”

“He certainly can,” replied the fair widow, with feeling.

“Have you heard him?” asked Hooven in a surprised tone.

“Oh—— I have heard Dolly and Miss Goddard extol his playing very highly; and their endorsement of a musician would satisfy me as to his proficiency.”

Mrs. Harmon's face flushed, and she appeared embarrassed as she replied to Hooven.

During the game Mrs. Harmon, as soon as she had become composed, had, in a tremulous voice, asked Sharpe:

"Did you know that Jay Harmon was here?"

"I did," he replied coldly.

"You did not tell me."

"No, but I had good reasons for not doing so."

"Does he know that I am here?"

"He has not the slightest suspicion."

"Shall I meet him?"

"I think you had better. A musicale has been arranged for Wednesday night at Cedar Hall, and he and Miss Goddard will play. You will probably meet him there."

"Mrs. Harmon," said Sharpe seriously, "you have said to me, and I am sure you were sincere, that you desired in some way to make repar—. Beg pardon, I will not put it as hard as you do. If you desire to serve the in-

terests of Mr. Harmon you can do so by remembering that he is Mr. Gould at all times and in all places. Meet him as you would any agreeable stranger. You can trust to his magnanimity and discretion."

"And you can trust me," replied Mrs. Harmon, "to do all you ask—and more, I hope."

There was a look of resolution in her beautiful face as she turned to watch, not the game, but the pale umpire, who, it was noted by all, was far from feeling well.

THE MILLINOCKET NINE

Russell Van Allen, pitcher—"small but lightning," and who surprised the U. of M. players.

Augustus Ferguson, catcher—a big blond, and "great at the bat."

Albert Crosby, 1st base—tall and handsome, a good base-runner and an adept at stealing bases.

Nathan F. Woodman, 2nd base—called "Nick of the Woods."

John Socabasin, 3rd base—called "Sock," a

full-blood Penobscot Indian, a fleet runner and a good all around player.

Henri Fornier, shortstop—alert, sure, and full of drollery.

Luther Flanders, right field—big, awkward and slow, but generally under flies in his territory.

Jim Gramme, left field—a giant, a terrible “slugger” at the bat, and a good fielder.

Sim Whitcomb, center field—a young minister who had not forgotten his college athletics.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE NINE

Lorenzo Dow, pitcher—called “Lou,” or “Shoestring,” tall and slender, the only light man on the team.

Hannibal Sampson, catcher—called “Han,” six feet one inch in height, weighs 200 lbs.

Sargeant Whitcomb, 1st base—five feet six inches in height, weighs 195 lbs.

Gardner Hunting, 2nd base—called “Gard,” or “Greyhound,” a noted runner, weighs 187 lbs.

Thomas U. Bailey, 3rd base—called “Tubby,” fat and jolly, and a good player.

William Toothacher, shortstop—called “Bill the Dentist.”

Byron Porter, left field—called “By.”

Joseph Porter, center field—called “Joe.”

(The Porters known as “The Orono Babies.”

Combined weight 437 lbs.)

Samuel Dudley, right field and captain—called “Orono’s Real Beauty,” red-headed and a terror to umpires.

Millinocket won the toss and took the field. Dow faced Russ, who began a gentle flow of chaff which ran through the game and more than once disconcerted the man at the bat. “Just turn sideways so I can see you, Shoestring. I will then try and remember that you are there.” Russ tossed in a few slow balls. Dow was expecting some hot ones and some fancy curves. He fanned twice at the slow balls, and then waited for the third. It came like a shot from a 30-30, with a quick drop over the plate, and Dow banged at it after it was in Ferguson’s hands. “Yodel a bit as you go to to the bench, Shoestring, so I can know where

you are at," taunted Russ. Henri turned a complicated series of handsprings, the Millinocket crowd yelled, and the players shouted their appreciation to Russ and Ferguson.

Han Sampson balanced his bat, ready for the first ball from Russ. "I can see you, all right," said Russ, as he gathered some sand and kneaded the ball, "but I can't see anything beyond you." The ball came, over the plate, and the umpire called a strike. The next one was delivered with all the signs of tremendous vigor, but it sailed slowly over the plate after Han had given the air a tremendous thwack. The next ball came in the instant after Russ received it from the catcher, and before Han could gather his wits. "Strike!" called the umpire, and Han went back to the tune of the Millinocket cheers.

Whitcomb took his stick and started forward. Captain Dudley walked with him, and evidently tried to impress him with the gravity of his task. Russ dallied with the ball and made much of his footholds. He pitched wild until three balls were called on him, and then

put in three straight and swift balls. Whitcomb let the first go by and got a strike called on him. He struck at the others, but was nervous and did not judge either the speed or the curve; and the visitors went into the field without seeing first base. "What's the matter with our Russ!" bellowed Link Lincoln, who was chief "rooter" for the Millinuckets. "*He's all right!*" roared the crowd of farmers, woodsmen, and log-drivers.

"What's the matter with our Gus!" he shouted again, and again the crowd answered in a Falling Water roar, "*He's all right!*" The tumult was quelled by the umpire, who raised his hand for silence and sent Russ to bat.

Dow "had it in" for Russ, who urbanely informed him that he was "visible against the northern sky," but suggested that he tie his handkerchief on his left arm "so that I can feel sure it is you and not Bill the Dentist's shadow." Dow flushed, opened his mouth to reply, but finally contented himself with a grin. Dow had a good delivery, and threw a ball that was exceedingly difficult to hit, but he had no

versatility. He was always strong during the first half of a game. Russ did not make a hit, though he fouled twice. When he retired the U. of M. contingent nearly split their throats with their yells. Jay finally sent Ferguson to bat, and the tumult subsided. Ferguson fouled twice, and then found the sphere for a safe hit to right of short, landing on first only a second ahead of the ball, which whizzed past his ear and "spatted" in Whitcomb's hands. It was a pretty play, and the applause was deserved by short, first base and striker. Ferguson was keyed up. He saw a possible chance to redeem himself and wipe out the record of his break with Jay. Albert Crosby had watched Dow's pitching, and went to bat determined to advance Ferguson at least one base. He fouled once and had a strike called on him. Then he struck savagely, and Ferguson shot to second. Sampson threw to second too hurriedly, Hunting was obliged to jump to the right to stop the ball, and Ferguson was safe, with Crosby on first. Ferguson made a daring steal to third, Woodman caught one of Dow's

beautiful pitches for a strong drive to right, over the head of short and wide of second, landing short of the right fielder—and Ferguson scored, with Crosby on second and Woodman on first.

Link's voice was drowned by a terrifying bellow from Lambert, who had just got sufficiently warmed up to use his log-drive voice. "Nick o' the Woods, *ye broke the jam!*" he yelled. "*Albert, ye've got to keep 'em in the stream! Sock, ye damned slow coach, wake up! D'ye hear, wake up! Git yer peavy and git to work!* Albert, yer got to climb the jam to ther bag, and yer got to *git* there! Nick, don't ye *roost* on that bag! I'll send Jay Gould to *git* ye movin', as I sent him to start up Lunt and Sykes! *Now Sock, yer standin' on the key log! Git yer peavy to work! Git to work!*"

This outburst was a novelty to all. Even Gould stood and drank it in, forgetting to keep the game moving. The crowd was delighted, and when Link could be heard he shouted, "*What's the matter with old Lum-*

bert!" and there was a roar of "*He's all right!*" from grand stand, bleachers and the field.

Dow now gave a beautiful exhibition of nerve and pitching. Sock was retired with just three pitches, and the men on bases could not move. Henri could not touch Dow's balls, and went to the bench after only five balls had been pitched.

The teams had now gauged each other, and the play was pretty even. The U. of M. made a score in the fourth by a good hit to right by Dudley, followed by a safe hit by Dow. Dudley got home through a muffed fly sent to Whitcomb by "Gard" Hunting. There was no more scoring until in the eighth Jim Gramme "got onto" Dow's method and sent the ball sailing over the heads of all the out-fielders for a well-earned home run. This brought Link and Lambert both to the front, and there was another chorus of exultant shouts, finally drowned by laughter at Lambert's lumberman vernacular. The Millinocketts had "found" Dow. His lack of ver-

satility was the U. of M.'s ruin. Russ was no better pitcher, but he was fertile in expedients calculated to confuse the strikers. The collegians never "found" him. As soon as they began to hit him, he changed his style. He pitched with either hand, and soon learned who among the U. of M. were worried by left-handed balls. He could pitch almost without preliminary movements. His arm would begin to swing gently, but the striker never knew whether it was the first of a series of gyrations preparatory to delivery, or whether the ball would shoot over the plate and get a strike called on him while he was wondering. It seems that Russ was noted in college for this unusual and peculiar ability to pitch without the usual preliminary contortions, and it had brought him some very flattering offers from league managers. None of the Millinocket players knew of it, and they were as delighted as the U. of M.'s were dismayed.

The ninth inning was stubbornly fought by both teams, but Dow was tired and rattled. He pitched pluckily, but his balls were hit, and

Whitcomb and Crosby scored. The U. of M. got two men on bases, with one out, when Russ "let himself out" and ended the game in one-two order.

After the first wild and uncontrollable enthusiasm on the part of the Millinuckets and their friends had partly exhausted itself in shouts and huzzas, and all those manifestations of joy with which the victors are wont to regale each other, came the reaction. There was something due their gallant opponents, the U. of M. At the front of the stand was seen the burly figure of the proprietor of the hotel. He signaled for silence and attention.

"I want to announce," he said, "that a gentleman—a stranger to me—left an order early this morning for the hotel to spread a banquet, the best that we could furnish, for both the victors and the vanquished, and their immediate friends, to the number of one hundred. The dinner will be ready at 8 P. M. The band will be present, and toasts and responses will be arranged. The dinner will be A banquet to the U. of M. by the Millinocket nine.

Every man is supposed to bring a sweetheart, sister, wife, mother, or grandmother."

The dinner was a tremendous success. There was but one thing lacking to make it perfect—the presence of the umpire. At the close of the game the doctor had ordered Gould to take to his bed at once. He thought he detected symptoms of pneumonia too serious to neglect. Jay retired to his room, the doctor attending him. It was but the beginning of the breaking down of his health and strength, brought about by the great burden of his responsibilities.

That night after the banquet Lionel Sharpe placed in the hands of President Hooven a New York draft for fifty thousand dollars, and told him to buy the stock in the name of Jay Gould Harmon, the real name of his manager,—no questions to be asked,—that the said Harmon might become a director of the corporation. The draft was signed by *Mrs. Marion Harmon*.

Sharpe said to Hooven, "This is no gift money. It belongs to Mr. Harmon. It is

his, and there is more to follow; but strange to say, Mr. Hooven, Mr. Harmon is wholly unaware of it. I know something of the mystery attaching to all this. You shall know all at an early day. Mr. Harmon is guiltless of any form of misdemeanor in the past—has only been unfortunate.”

CHAPTER XXIV

WHEN the directors met, three days from that time, they made Jay G. Harmon a director, and raised his salary to ten thousand a year. But he knew it not. He lay unconscious in his old room at Sunny Point, stricken with typhoid fever. Nurses had been provided, and the most skillful doctors were in attendance, charged not to leave the town while life remained in their patient. From the time of the first consultation they had given his friends but little hope of his recovery. Dr. Finnegan was early consulted, and at once won the respect of the city doctors by his shrewd skill and untiring zeal.

The little town of Falling Water was virtually in mourning, if sad faces and anxious hearts are its signs and symbols.

At the end of seven days there had been no improvement. The fourteenth day had come.

"To-night will decide it," said the solemn doctor to the grief-stricken family of Major Crosby.

In the morning the doctor thought, to the joy of all, that the fever had turned, and said that there was a mere possibility that he might survive, but only a possibility.

A despatch came about ten o'clock, addressed to the Major. With a trembling voice he read to his family, dumb with astonishment, the following:

*"Arrived Boston this morning. Alone.
Home 5 p. m. Lois."*

That night the watcher at the bedside of Jay Gould was Lois Crosby, but he was unconscious of it.

From his parched and fevered lips Lois heard the story of Gould's love for her. "Oh, Uncle! Uncle! you have killed him!" And then again he would murmur, "Are you sick, sir? Can I help you?"

Time after time he would repeat these words,

sometimes adding, "Lois, did not you know I loved you? Could you not see it in my eyes and hear it in my voice, that night at Joey's bedside?"

This was said incoherently, but the hungry heart of the loving girl easily made out the meaning. Her own love grew passionate. She wanted to gather him to her heart and tell him how long she had loved him. At the time she could scarcely restrain herself from some act of endearment, some caress, to relieve the pressure of her affection. But the presence of the alert nurse made even the gentlest demonstration impossible and unwise.

The nurse little dreamed how great was the effort made by the pale and beautiful woman at the bedside to hold the promptings of her heart in abeyance.

There came days when the doctors had nearly given up hope. They saw no chance for their patient. One day they thought Jay was dying, and told the weeping family that if they wished to see him alive once more they should come to his bedside.

Silently and in tears they gathered around the seemingly dying man. None of them, save Lois, could restrain their grief.

Lois, white as marble and quite as cold and composed, insisted on remaining. No modesty restrained her now. She took his white hands in her own, kissed them passionately, and whispered her love. She called him her hero, her prince, her king. She did not speak, but the terrible pain at her heart was relieved as the dumbly moving lips gave silent utterance to her feelings. An hour went by, and still she stood there, her hands softly caressing the brow of her lover.

The nurse approached and looked at Jay. She placed her hand upon his pulse, then touched his temple. She summoned the doctor. The look in her face had frightened Lois. She thought the end had come, that even while she stood there his spirit had flown. She moved to the foot of the bed, in dumb agony, and waited for the verdict.

After a hasty examination, the doctor looked up, and his face brightened as he said: "The

fever has turned. He is asleep and there is a little moisture. It would appear, Miss Crosby, that there is magic in your hands. I think I am warranted in saying that with careful nursing, Mr. Gould may live."

Lois sank in a swoon at the doctor's feet.

The next morning the doctor gave the family a little more encouragement, but said that he could not permit Miss Crosby's attendance upon the patient, as it was too hazardous to her own health. The doctor's orders were obeyed. But Lois took great comfort in preparing the very simple food with which the patient was nourished.

The doctors and nurses stayed at the hotel when not on duty. The door of the sick room leading into the living room had been closed and sealed. The house was daily aired and disinfected. The family had refused to leave their friend, although advised to do so by both doctors.

Albert remained at Millinocket, and our Russ, to his great delight, was made his assistant. Although a very rich man's son, he had

caught the spirit of the enterprise, and realized the nobility of useful labor. He plunged into his new work with all the energy and enthusiasm of a tyro. He never was so happy in his life, and declared his intention to henceforth earn his living.

Day by day the patient slowly recovered his strength. In ten days all danger had passed, but he was still very weak, and unable to leave his bed.

In the meantime, the "Lodge of Katahdin" had been completed, and was being furnished by Sharpe's agents.

Squire Gray had, for the past two months, been the only one allowed in the house, save the contractor and workmen. A watchman guarded it nights. Not one in the town had entered the doors since the final work had begun. The furniture had come so wrapped that inquiring eyes—and there were many—had failed to discover what it was like. A carload of decorations, pictures, bric-a-brac, etc., had arrived, boxed and covered beyond the reach of prying eyes.

To the delight of the town it had been announced that as soon as Mr. Gould—the name which his friends still insisted on calling him—should recover sufficiently to allow him to be present, the Lodge was to be opened and a banquet given, and that only the people of Falling Water, with a few exceptions, were to be invited.

Immediately the town went wild. The exceptions, they all declared, were to be the Count de Mowbray and his friends. There would be a wedding, and they would all witness the ceremony, which would make a daughter of Falling Water the Countess de Mowbray. Happy, simple people! How little they suspected that Lois Crosby saw in the pale and emaciated man in her father's house one far nobler than any peer of France.

Major Crosby and his wife had long understood to whom Lois's heart had been given. From the day that Gould had entered their home they had seen something in their daughter's face which betrayed more than pity, more than interest.

As the character of the man unfolded, and that untellable charm which high breeding and culture lend to a refined and noble nature manifested itself, they saw that Lois's heart was no longer her own, but had passed into the keeping of the handsome stranger. They had seen nothing in the actions of Gould that indicated any response to her unsought love, and when their daughter left her home in company with her mother to visit their kindred in Paris, they had given up all hope that Lois's love would ever be returned. Judge of their surprise and joy when Gould's letter confessing his love came. They knew that no title, no proud station in society, no wealth, could operate to extinguish the unalterable love which Lois bore Gould. Without a word of comment his letter was sent to her. And when Gould had been brought to their home, and the doctors had said that he was stricken with typhoid fever and might not live, a cablegram was sent containing these words:

"Gould stricken typhoid fever. Doctors despair of recovery. Father."

The parents knew that she would return to the bedside of her lover, especially if she had received the letter containing his confession. But they did not think it possible for her to reach America as early as she did; and, therefore, while they were prepared to learn that she was about to start on the voyage, they were astonished at hearing of her arrival in America. She said little about the count and his suit, more than this:

"I tried to show him that a marriage with love on only one side could not be a happy one. He never formally proposed. I believe they never do in France, only to the parents. When he read father's cablegram, which said so simply, 'In my daughter's heart you will find my answer,' he and his family took it for granted that everything had been settled. The letter," she continued, her face flushing, "of Mr. Gould's, which you sent me, made it impossible for me to marry Count de Mowbray. And when your cablegram came announcing Mr. Gould's sickness, I knew where my duty lay. My course was plain. I frankly laid the whole

matter before the count, and confessed my love, and he, as noble in spirit as in blood, admitted that I was doing what was right before God and man, and bade me ‘God speed.’ I took the next steamer. And father, mother,” she said as she sank beside her mother’s chair, burying her face in her lap, “you know the rest.”

Gould was still confined to his bed. He recognized his friends—those who were allowed to see him. Since the danger point had been passed, it was the practice of Lois to rise at four o’clock in the morning and relieve the nurse. She had been doing this for several mornings, retiring before he awoke. Nothing had been said to him of her arrival. But one morning, being overcome by sleep, her head had sunk upon the bed as she sat in the chair, her hair falling upon his hand. She was suddenly recalled to herself by hearing an excited voice say:

“Lois, Lois! am I dreaming? Take my hand, my darling, if you are really here. Touch my forehead with your lips again that I

may know that it is not a beautiful but cruel dream."

She raised her head as far as it was possible, for one of his hands had grasped her hair, and he had partly raised himself with the other, and with wild, hungry eyes was looking into her face. Her woman's soul gave itself up to one moment of mortal ecstasy. She arose, and again her arms were around his neck. She strained him to her breast as she would a child. She kissed his eyes, his brow, and his lips. She murmured every sweet endearment that had been so long imprisoned in her heart. Suddenly she laid him back upon the pillow, and after one long, lingering kiss, she ran from the room, her face scarlet, Gould calling after her: "Lois, Lois, don't go!"

At breakfast time Lois begged to be excused, complaining of some indisposition.

The next morning she appeared as usual at his bedside, calm and dignified. As soon as the nurse had retired, Gould, who seemed excited, said:

"I cannot be satisfied until I tell you how



" And you do love me, Lois ? "

long I have loved you. I think it began back at the brookside, when you lifted my head and said, ‘Are you sick, sir; can I help you?’ Those sweet words of pity have dwelt with me these many months. O Lois, is it too late? How could you kiss me if you loved the count? What brought you home?”

“This brought me home, my precious hero,” said Lois, her passion rising again. And she handed him the letter in which he had confessed his love. He glanced at it, then said:

“That letter was a heaven-born inspiration, yet my heart was cold and hopeless when I wrote it. And you do love me, Lois?”

“More than words can frame. More than lips can speak. I love you like this,” and the fair woman, giving up to her love, gathered him again to her bosom, and rained on him faster than he could respond her virgin kisses.

So oft it is that natures outwardly cold and unresponsive have fires within that are consuming; but when they find vent, are released from their imprisonment, they become nearly uncontrollable.

From this time Gould's recovery was rapid. He could not bear to have Lois out of his sight. The family were enjoying a degree of happiness they had never known before. Nothing had been said to change the generally accepted report in the town that the Count de Mowbray was coming to Falling Water as soon as the Lodge was finished, which they still continued to call "Château de Neumoirs." It was to be the count's American home, and the wedding would take place at the opening of the house, when all were to be present. There would probably be princes and dukes, friends of the count, and they would meet them. Just think of it—to shake hands with a duke and a count! It was more than happiness! it was glory. Where this idea originated will never be known, but around the old Squire's fireplace, in the mouths of that curious, conjecturing group, the theme was perennial, and grew and fattened until all the principals in the *dramatis personæ* were, through the medium of their robust imaginations, characterized and tagged. The Squire alone held the secret. It was

safe with him. He it was who had told the Major that there were good reasons why he—the Major and his family—should not enter nor ask to enter the Lodge until the night of the opening.

“Trust me in this matter, Major Crosby, and do not in any way disabuse, for the present, the minds of the people as to the first name of the Lodge. There are good reasons for them to continue to think that its name will be ‘Château de Neumoirs.’”

“Squire Gray,” replied the Major, “any suggestions or wish of yours shall be carried out to the utmost.”

And so the secret was kept. The great day had come. Lionel Sharpe, with three distinguished-looking friends, had arrived. Of the three latter neither Lige, Cornish nor Cary could agree which was the count, which was the duke, and which was the prince; each one argued wisely and sagely what they thought to be the outward signs of their rank. It was curious and original reasoning.

Abby Smart had said: “We can tell all

about it when we are produced to them. I have three maltese kittens I am going to give to Lois. I have been feeding them on melted butter for two months to make them slick. I have read somewhere that the royal family just dote on maltese cats. Maybe I shall decide to give the prince one and the duke and dukess one, if she comes. I don't think the Countess de Bombay will mind. What are you going to give them, Bijey?"

"If I had a maltese pup," sniffled Bige, "I might give that. You say nothing but maltese goes with the ryal family."

"That's what I read in the book of 'British Peerage' that I borrowed of that English fam-
ily in Greensburg. Well, I can't say that I
read it, but they told me so, and lots of other
wonderful things. If I am going to 'sociate
in the future with dukesses and members of
the French court [and her airs were something
distressing] it behoofs me to know something
of their customs and habits." And she
flounced out of the post office with an air, as
she thought, befitting an exalted station.

CHAPTER XXV

AT twelve o'clock, noon, the doors of the Lodge were opened, and the people invited to enter and inspect the house.

The lodge had been built on broad and liberal lines. While but two stories high, the roof lay low and projected over the walls on all sides quite five feet. This gave the house a protecting, brooding effect. The windows were large and many. The general finish on the first floor was dark, but the windows let in so much light that the somber stain of timbers and walls lent no gloom. The great hall in the center, twelve feet wide, swept entirely across the house, thirty feet, free and clear. As you stood in the center looking southwest the rippling river was before you, and beyond this a landscape of homes and farms environed by the tumbling mountains. To the northwest the scene was equally attractive. The woods

came nearly to the door. The trees had been cut out sufficiently to let in the sunlight. A suggestive road led its winding way through the trees which nearly canopied it. To the left, "peeks" here and there disclosed the shining waters of the Penobscot. One felt drawn to enter and traverse, all alone, this bower of peace, where, far from the tumult of the world, its pride, its vanity, its selfishness, one could commune with Nature, feel her touch, behold her beauty, and hear her sweet voice, if he but brought with him a soul attuned and ears and eyes sensitive to the delicate sounds and spiritual beauties that encompassed him.

The first thing that attracted the people as they entered was a large room on the left, thirty feet long and twenty feet wide. The opening from the hall was ample, disclosing the great fireplace built of native stones. It was guiltless of the modern fancy tiling, of burnished brass tongs and shovels, but in their place were utensils of solid iron of sufficient strength to handle the great wood appropriate for such a fire-place. It was a timbered ceiling, the tim-

bers being carefully hewn from the native spruce. They were stained a dark brown, while between them on the rough plaster the soft greenish yellow which obtains in the shade of the early poplar leaf was used. The effect was charming. The floor was of polished maple, with a large and beautiful rug in the centre, while smaller ones were scattered about in charming haphazardness. The furniture was massive. Young elms and ash had been fashioned into chairs, rockers, benches and settles. Where it was possible the bark remained upon them, and was thoroughly varnished. Over the great fireplace hung a picture which attracted many observers. It was that of a soldier of the Union, a Major in full uniform, and under it in gold letters was written "Major Daniel Crosby."

Sharpe had borrowed a small picture on some pretext, and had had it enlarged and painted. Other pictures appropriate to the room hung on the walls. In the hall was a picture which the people could not seem to leave—a view of a log-jam on Grand Falls.

On the right was a library, and that too had a large fireplace. There were many books, globes, and maps, and in one corner a Chickering Grand piano, and on it was a card which read: "A wedding present to Mademoiselle Lois Crosby from her husband to be."

If the many who were present had dared to express their thoughts openly there would have been a chorus, "Didn't I tell you so?" "Just what I've always said," etc.

Abby could not hold in, but had to speak out: "I knowed the count was here, and I knowed there was going to be a marriage. It's going to be jest as I told you. The whole ryal family is hid in some of those big rooms, waiting for the folks to get here. O, dear! I can't hardly wait for the dukesses and princesses to come downstairs. I wonder where the weddng ceremony will take place. I am going to watch the countess, so I'll know what to do at my nupshales."

They had done away entirely with the ghastly modern parlor. The house was for service, not for show. The library had been

finished in soft olive. It had the timbered effect, and an air of spaciousness and quiet beauty. The six chambers above were painted in soft colors, quite light, and to the simple eyes that beheld them they seemed like the abodes of angels, so delicate, so artistic and perfect in every appointment were they.

The people who passed through the house grew strangely quiet when they realized that the trees that had grown about them, the companions of their boyhood, youth, and manhood, had been converted by the hand of art into these things of beauty and utility. They felt, many of them, that they lost sight of the spiritual use of beauty superadded to utility.

In the open grove on the northwest, tables had been placed and decked fittingly. The tables were spread so as to run parallel and quite near the long broad porch.

The people were told to seat themselves at the tables. Not one of the Crosby family or any of the "distinguished guests" had been seen. Squire Gray, assisted by Gramme and Link Lincoln, was superintending everything.

Tables also had been placed upon the porch, on both sides of the broad steps, and one on the walk below and in front, evidently reserved for someone.

Suddenly there was heard the sound of the Mendelssohn "Wedding March" from an orchestra concealed in the upper hall. Then in the door appeared Major Crosby and his wife, Gould and Lois, Madeline and Carter, Albert and Dolly, Lionel Sharpe and a tall, dark-complexioned man whom everybody thought to be the Count, President Hooven, the directors and their ladies, also Rev. Mr. Fessenden and Helen. I should have said that in the Crosby group were John Crosby and his wife. All of the former's arrogance and pomposity had left him, and he appeared as he really was, a strong, sturdy yeoman of the soil.

And last but not least of those who came forward with the distinguished guests was Dr. Finnegan. His whole person seemed to glow with effulgent good-nature. It was the "red letter" day of his life, and he made the most of it.

The visitors from out of town, including the "ryal family," occupied the tables right and left on the porch, but the Crosby family went down the steps and seated themselves at the reserved table in the midst of their friends and neighbors.

The Squire, from the steps, addressed the people as follows:

"Friends and neighbors, before we partake of the bounty spread for us by a generous hand, I desire to make a few remarks. A few years ago there appeared in our midst a stranger, a young man suffering from sickness and misfortune. There was a good Samaritan in our town who, without questioning, seeing only a suffering brother, took him to his home and nursed him back to health."

(Here Gould turned, with a surprised look, towards the Squire.)

"It is unnecessary for me to recount," continued the Squire, "the events which followed. How we gradually learned to respect and love the stranger; how he repaid us; how, on sev-

eral occasions, he risked his life for some of our people; how he brought hope and help to our nearly despairing neighbor; and to our town, some degree of fame by being the home hero of Grand Falls. That he has proven himself a strong man and capable, an honest man and generous, a man of ripe genius, without pride; a man of deeds, without vanity; a man of highest culture and refinement, without egotism, and without display; is but to tell the truth and to honor ourselves by honoring him.

"But there is an interesting sequel to all this. This stranger had a friend of wealth and influence who had despaired (judging of men and women as he knew them in New York) of ever meeting a perfectly unselfish man; one in whom altruism had found its perfect symbol and character. But when he heard from the lips of his friend, Mr. Jay Gould Harmon (for that is to be his name henceforward, my neighbors) the story of a Samaritan kindness he felt that he owed a debt not only to Major Crosby but to the town in which he lived, to its people who had be-

friended this friend, believing in him, trusting in him with unquestioning faith.

"Now, what I am going to say is known to no man or woman here, save the giver and myself. This house, with all its furnishings, is given in fee simple to Major Daniel Crosby and his heirs forever, as his appreciation and recognition of the real spirit of altruism and sweet charity which he believed to be banished from the world. Here are the deeds, dated this day.

"Another secret I hold: You were expecting to witness to-day the marriage of the French Count de Mowbray to one of our daughters, Lois Crosby. You shall not be disappointed. There will not only be one wedding, but two. The bridegrooms, however, will not come 'out of the east' to take away our fair Inezes; but they will come from our own sons—our American princes of blood. Arise, and attend to the wedding ceremony of Jay Gould Harmon and Lois Crosby, and Arthur Carter and Madeline Crosby. The Rev. Mr. Fessenden will officiate."

These revelations had followed one another so rapidly that the people, too much astonished to comment, were silent. Only by look did they express themselves. They arose and watched the ceremony to the end, and then were told by Squire Gray to celebrate the event by falling-to and eating everything in sight.

"There is still another thing I forgot to tell you," resumed the Squire. "The old home of Major Crosby is to be converted into a gymnasium, bathroom, and library, for the good of the people of Falling Water, given to them by the same generous man who has done so much throughout this county for the schools. I must caution you of the futility of trying to learn his name. In good time you shall know.

"Now, make merry!"

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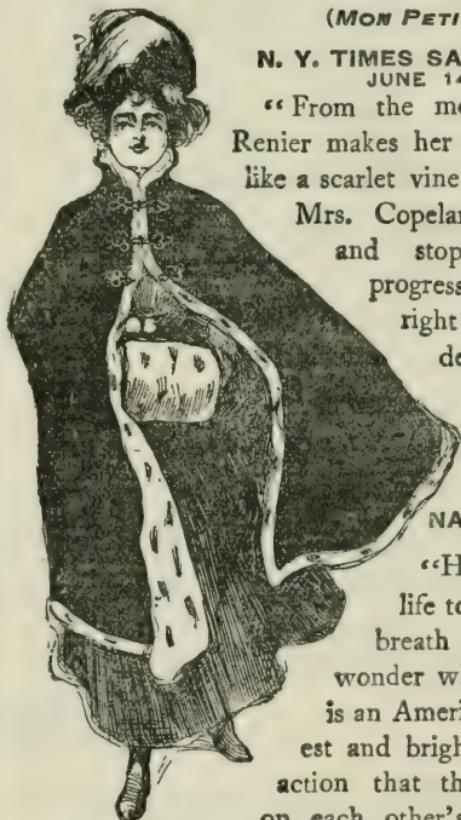
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